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**A Permanent Revolution of the Heart  
Pragmatic Re-Christianisation in Richard Hooker and Friedrich Schleiermacher**

Levanway, William Douglas

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A Permanent Revolution of the Heart: Pragmatic Re-Christianisation  
in Richard Hooker and Friedrich Schleiermacher

By

William Levanway

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King's College London  
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## Abstract

The Reformation, according to historian Scott Hendrix, can be understood as a movement responding to a semi-pagan Europe detached from living Christian piety. The failure of Christian piety in everyday life, despite its speculative richness, produced a situation demanding a missionary response. The theologies of Richard Hooker and Friedrich Schleiermacher represent two such responses in the turbulent wake of the institutionalisation of Protestantism.

Is this ‘Reformation’ situation, though, exceptional, or normative for Christian theology? Are Christians, and Christian theologians by extension, committed to a permanent revolution of human values or is confessionalisation necessary step? In a time when Western culture evinces a level of disconnect similar to the Reformation situation, theology needs to understand the tactics of those who sought to construct appropriate missionary theologies. The tactics they employed remain living hypotheses for fundamental theologies deciding between reconstruction and confessionalisation. The hypothesis scrutinised in thesis is a principled scepticism and committed reconstruction responsive to the situation of Re-Christianisation. It will be presented as a living and momentous, but not *forced*, hypothesis in this thesis.

This thesis uses Jamesian Pragmatism to approach this hypothesis in Hooker and Schleiermacher. Both pursued Re-Christianisation in terms of the Reformation without adopting a rigidly confessional position preferring a process of progressive Christianisation beginning in the affective life. For them, Re-Christianisation begins with a pre-reflective experience of the world as an ordered integrity modified by the living power of Jesus Christ at that pre-thematic level of the desiring and feeling body.

The thesis contributes to contemporary Re-Christiansiation by providing a clearer understanding of the process in terms of Pragmatism instead of Idealist confessionalism or reductive empiricism. The pragmatic style practised by Hooker and Schleiermacher emerges as a possible strategy for the renewal of the body of Christian piety and reconstructive reflection on it.

**Dedication**

For

Russell Wilford Levanway  
(1919-2011)

and

James William Gorman  
(1924-2011)

A small token in honour of a great inheritance of piety and learning

## Acknowledgements

One accrues an almost infinite number of debts working on a project of this scale.

I owe a debt of immense gratitude to my supervisors, Oliver Davies and Vernon White. Oliver encouraged, critiqued, and cajoled me throughout the writing of this thesis giving me the necessary space to develop my own thinking. I would not have been able to apply myself to the material in as rigorous or creative a way without his support.

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The final year of writing for this thesis took place at St. Stephen’s House, Oxford. The staff and fellow ordinands have taught me, sustained me, and given me the space to complete the thesis relatively undisturbed. I am in debt to them for their willingness to let me disappear to my study after mass without any questions. I will be very happy to tell them that my ‘great matter’ has been concluded.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

The goal of this thesis is to investigate one way Christians have tried to find responsible speech after serious theological, philosophical, and cultural changes through a return to the source of Christian piety. It will accomplish this task by examining Richard Hooker and Friedrich Schleiermacher's attempts to produce meaningful accounts of Christian piety possessing integrity and responsibility as part of the reconstructive task of Re-Christianisation. The relation between doctrine, reflective accounts of Christian life, and Christian piety—‘certain patterns of human living and dying’—will be understood as a kind of pragmatism.<sup>1</sup> The goal will *not* be an attempted reconstruction of Christian faith under present conditions, but, instead, an investigation of the hermeneutic task of Re-Christianisation practiced by Hooker and Schleiermacher as a possible resource for contemporary thought: a living and momentous hypothesis.

Re-Christianisation or Reformation, taken in as wide a sense as possible, will be understood as an existential dynamic in the Christian life not simply as a historical occurrence, or, rather, an existential commitment to a form of piety announced powerfully in that historical occurrence so as to delimit future responses and developments. As an essay in hermeneutical theology, but not hermeneutics, the thesis is concerned with the production, personal appropriation, and reinterpretation of an inherited way of living, including its symbols, pieties, and

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1. Rowan Williams 'What is Catholic Orthodoxy?' in R. D. Williams and Kenneth Leech (eds.), *Essays Catholic and Radical* (London: BowarDean Press, 1983) p. 16.

reflections, in time under the pressure of the object of Christian piety, Jesus Christ.<sup>2</sup> The bulk of this thesis, therefore, will be concerned with mapping the modulations and shifts in the Christian life on display in the major theological works of Hooker and Schleiermacher.

By bringing out the underlying grammar of their accounts of the experience of God's agency in Christ in the present, I will demonstrate a common pragmatic conception of Christian doctrine as a continuing process of verification and expression in concrete, historical Christian communities resulting from a living divine agency. The dynamic begins with an existentially basic and pre-reflective experience of the world as possessing ordered integrity apart from human construction that can, depending on the availability of certain cultural and linguistic resources, lead to a conceptualisation of God as Creator in some circumstances or the simple experience of individual finitude in others. The orientation to God and the world receives a decisive modification in the historical life of Jesus of Nazareth when this same ordering power is known as a purposeful agent acting for the salvation of creation. Communal norms emerge as Christians attempt to understand Jesus of Nazareth in terms of the order encountered in the world. Re-Christianisation can become a normative concern when Christ's modification of piety is taken as a constant challenge engendering a scepticism towards final solutions and a continuing need for the reconstruction of belief; a permanent revolution of the heart in the Christian believer: the 'conversion and permanent revolution of our human religion through Jesus Christ...by which all religious truths are painfully transformed and all religious behaviour transfigured by

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2. 'The revealed truth of God has an identity *in* the world. The offer of truth to the Church and by the Church is not only an invitation to ecstatic vision but it also defines the way to that vision.' Cornelius Ernst *Multiple Echo* eds. Fergus Kerr OP and Timothy Radcliffe OP (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2006) p. 81.

repentance and new faith.’<sup>3</sup> Locating this pragmatic dynamic in the *Lawes of Ecclesiasticall Politie* and *The Christian Faith*, the thesis will chart a personal dialectic centred on the cultivation of Christian thinking and doing in light of the continued language-forming force of the generative experience of God's agency in Christ.

I will now turn to Re-Christianisation as a concept and an agenda before looking to its pragmatic testing and application.

### *I. Re-Christianisation and Reformation*

The Reformation historian Scott Hendrix has proposed the rubric of Re-Christianisation as a unitive definition of the various Protestant and Catholic reform movements in their common attempt to return Europe to the ground of Christian life in the face of a shifting symbolic world. The primary goal of the Reformers was to 'Re-Christianise' areas of Europe, especially rural churches, viewed as insufficiently Christian in their worship, belief, and daily living.<sup>4</sup>

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3. H. Richard Niebuhr *The Meaning of Revelation* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2006) pp. 99, 95. See also: H. Richard Niebuhr *Radical Monotheism and Western Culture* (New York: Harper and Row, 1960) p. 126.

4. To establish this unity, he argues against two tendencies in Reformation studies. First, a number of scholars oppose viewing the Reformation as possessing any intrinsic unity. Instead they focus on its plural manifestations in order to speak of Reformations. These arguments tend to go one of two ways. The first group sees the Reformation as possessing an internally unclaimed unity projected onto it by an outside group, perhaps the contemporary opposition of the Counter-Reformation or later academic scholars who want to stress cultural continuity throughout the Reformation period in Europe. The Catholic Church's Counter-Reformation response 'made the Reformation a single phenomenon, namely, a decisive and lasting break in Western Christianity.' This view has also found credence with ecumenically minded scholars who want to see the Reformation as local reform movements within the larger church catholic. Second, 'the Reformation also seems to be marginalised by recent arguments that medieval piety remained popular and hard to uproot in areas that officially became Protestant.' The gradual nature of the Reformation and the stubborn persistence of practices of medieval piety call into question the extent or viability of the 'Reformation' in many places where it was an elite project. Hendrix 'Rerooting the Faith: The Reformation as Re-Christianization' *Church History* 69:3 (2003) pp. 558-563.

'Protestants set out to make changes to Christianity because they regarded both the practice and the theology behind [existing Christianity] as wrong.'<sup>5</sup> But Reformers had to establish 'coherent theological reasons' for their attempts at reform: '[their] theologies were born in this interaction between reform and reflection; that is, they were driven by the *agendas* of the reformers.'<sup>6</sup> The goal was not a strictly Protestant one—the Roman Catholic Jean Gerson, for instance, continued earlier criticisms of superstitions and remnant pagan practices, while a little later Johannes van Paltz could rebuke Christians who had recourse 'to unapproved sites, magic astrology and alchemy' or ran from church to church on Good Friday in hope of present benefits.<sup>7</sup> The mainstream lay piety of most Christians incorporated some level of this 'superstition' as a holdover from a previous incomplete Christianisation of European society so that the God of Jesus Christ was not the principle of meaning in their lives and they required recourse to 'magic' to satisfy perceived needs.<sup>8</sup> For this reason, existing practices and symbol systems destabilised when Christ was moved to the centre of piety, when he was made 'the centre and criterion of Christian faith,' by a range of Reformers.<sup>9</sup> These problems, moreover, were not new. They were constant factors in the evangelisation of cultures retaining various levels of 'pagan' religious practices and pieties.

The Reformation crisis of popular piety, in fact, parallels, and in some cases repeats, earlier crises and reforms in Europe especially the theological work of the *via moderna* and the practical reforms of the *devotio moderna*. Both movements

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5. Scott Hendrix *Recultivating the Vineyard* (Westminster John Knox Press: Louisville, 2004) p. 170.

6. Hendrix *Recultivating* p.170.

7. Hendrix *Recultivating* pp. 11-13.

8. Hendrix *Recultivating* p. 17.

9. Hendrix *Recultivating* p. 171.

pushed toward a renewal of Christian devotion through a constructive engagement with the early church. According to Heiko Oberman,

'both *via moderna* and *devotio moderna* sought to transcend the scholastic and above all, the monastic, controversies, in pursuit of a synthesis of *scientia* and *sapientia* that would further a renewal of the Christian charity characteristic of the primitive church.'<sup>10</sup>

A renewed Christian practice was pursued even if it involved the breakdown of a stable symbolic or 'metaphysically fool-proof causal system which [embraced] the whole chain of being, including God as first and final cause.'<sup>11</sup> The appeals to *simplicitas* and *experientia* lead to an emphasis on moral formation and ecclesial reform. Carter Lindberg sums up this breakdown: 'But the core of the crisis [of the late medieval period] was the tottering the symbols of security... This crisis came to a head in the crisis of the guarantor of those symbols—the church.'<sup>12</sup>

As it began with church criticism, Luther's work provides a helpful example of this tottering.

Luther removes the *fixed authoritative* character of the indulgence system in his ninety-five theses: 'Any truly repentant Christian has a right to full remission of penalty and guilt, even without indulgence letters.'<sup>13</sup> Without reference to a complex set of relationships, i.e. the medieval indulgence system, the sinner was being offered a way to know him or herself as a creature justified before God. According to Luther, Christ gave the Christian more than a temporary, heightened experience, as was offered by miraculous shrines or enthusiastic worship, but a way of experiencing the world as such.<sup>14</sup> Christ could provide a stable sense of the

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10. Heiko Oberman *Masters of the Reformation* (CUP: 1981) p. 46.

11. Heiko Oberman *The Dawn of the Reformation: Essays in Late Medieval and Early Reformation Thought* (W.B. Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, 1992) p. 6.

12. Lindberg *The European Reformations* pp. 40-41. I am also following Lindberg's account of religion as a way of making meaning of the world detailed on pp. 49-50

13. Thesis 36 in *Luther's Works* 31:28.

14. '[For Luther f]aith begins in the experience of *accusatio sui*, alienation from self, guilt, the sense of condemnation: an experience which becomes *metanoia* when it is seen as taking of the

self, even when the world order was in disarray, and could even cause the dissolution of conceptions of the world order. The guarantor of the symbolic world was moving in physics, metaphysics and theology to different parties.<sup>15</sup>

Luther returned to Christ through an affective theology of '*simplicitas* and *experientia*.' Affection and attachment in faith not only let Christians endure the loss of symbolic hierarchies, but called those very hierarchies into question. This endurance was possible as long as Christ was able to provide a fixed point or principle of meaning around which to orient the rest of a believer's life and thought. Luther saw this affective attachment in terms of God's active constitution of the believer in the believer's union with Christ. The knowledge of God generally derived from knowledge of the world cannot be the direct source of Christian formation. Apart from the cross: 'that wisdom, which sees the invisible things of God in works as visible completely puffs up, blinds, and hardens.'<sup>16</sup> Knowledge of God undertaken by humanity can never be a neutral affair but works certain moral, existential effects in the person. Luther's adherence to the cross as a source of theological wisdom mirrors his concern with the need for felt grace and forgiveness among the people more generally.

In fact, Luther seems to elide the theological task with this form of penitential piety. The theologian does not gain easy access or an upper hand through fine-grained speculative distinctions about God. Instead, the simple everyday experiences of believers provide the basis of even elite theological knowledge. Theology and penance both draw upon the historical concepts God has chosen to

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cross, standing where Christ once stood, under Law, under wrath... Nor is it a momentary or a transitory experience, solved and removed by justification...' Rowan Williams *The Wound of Knowledge* (Cambridge, MA: Cowley Publications, 1990) p. 148.

15. Amos Funkenstein *Theology and the Scientific Imagination from the Middle Ages to the Seventeenth Century* p. 63.

16. *Heidelberg Disputation* Thesis 22 in *Luther's Works* 31:40-41

use while allowing God to remain God in their use. God elects eternally and actively in grace; God remains hidden in God's visibility on the cross. The believer, then, does not enter into a world of seemingly obvious meanings, elaborate speculative reasonings, or philosophical abstractions. 'Every deed of the law without the grace of God appears good outwardly, but inwardly it is sin. This in opposition to the scholastics.'<sup>17</sup> Through the work of the cross, and only through it, the Christian knows better.

Armed with these and similar insights, the Reform movements saw existing medieval Christian cultures as former Christian missionary fields choked with pagan weeds. According to Hendrix: '[Luther's] criticism indicates that he understood the religion around him not as outright paganism, but as a religion that could still transmit the symbols of Christianity but did not instil the substance of the faith in many of its adherents.'<sup>18</sup> The desired outcome of Reformation for the great majority of the Reformers was to 'infuse their culture with a deeper and more authentic Christian piety' by upholding 'Christ as the exclusive object of veneration.'<sup>19</sup> Christocentric piety was the goal, not simply a culture making use of Christian cultic symbolism or images. Reformers, then, 'would not Christianise as before, i.e., convert pagans to Christian belief and ritual, but convince people who had already been baptised to believe and practice the faith in a way judged by Protestants to be more valid.'<sup>20</sup>

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17. *Disputations Against Scholastic Theology* 76 *Luther's Works* 31:14 'No syllogistic form is valid when applied to divine terms. This in opposition to the Cardinal.' 47 *Luther's Works* 31:12.

18. Hendrix 'Rerooting the Faith' p 563.

19. Hendrix 'Rerooting the Faith' pp. 568, 566. Hendrix includes Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, and Bucer, but Bullinger, Cranmer and Vermigli could easily be added to the list.

20. Hendrix *Recultivating* p. 18.

The rather amorphous character of the Reform movements led to a process of confessionalisation in an attempt to maintain the movement's integrity as an evangelical force in Europe.

‘The rise of confessions can be seen as the structural outcome of the Reformation agenda, which anchored new ways of being Christian in the culture. The faith could be rerooted, it turned out, in diverse patterns of theology and piety and in different sociopolitical contexts, which we call the confessional groupings of early modern Europe.’<sup>21</sup>

Renewed veneration of and dependence upon Christ determined the goals, tactics, and forms of this new Christocentric piety.<sup>22</sup> The affective attachment to Jesus Christ grounding the Reform movements through the dissolution of previously existing communal structures, could now become the basis for the resumption of a coherent world within new confessional structures. For some parties, the Reformation revolution was not necessarily permanent.

Hendrix accounts for these substantial divergences in the programs and confessions of Reformation groups by attributing them to differences in tactics not strategy: ‘Reformers certainly differed on how it was best done, but they were united, even most of the radicals, in the conviction that piety had to be refocused on Jesus as the way of salvation.’<sup>23</sup> Forming people into authentic Christian piety required more than simply topdown changes to religious practice. It required God given devotion. Differing versions of Christianisation came about, though, not only because of different cultural-political contexts. Doctrinal differences, despite significant areas of overlap, also determined the plan of Christianisation pursued in various contexts and locales. As a reform project, the Reformation project of Christianisation, worked from the tension between pre-existing concepts of God,

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21. Hendrix ‘Rerooting the Faith’ p. 573.

22. ‘Reformers differed over how Jesus caused this transformation--as example, as teacher, as mediator, or as the Spirit--but they were convinced that recapturing a Christological centre was the way for their religion to change lives.’ Hendrix, *Recultivating*, p. 172.

23. Hendrix ‘Rerooting’ pp. 566, 568-571.



where God secures a structured, meaningful word, and the living reality of Jesus Christ as the Lord who calls for repentance, a step into a new world.

In these various movements a basic dynamic of formation and reform emerges. When conventional norms or over-beliefs fail to be intelligible, fail to accord with the natural attunement of that culture's members, then what is required is *either* a testing of those beliefs and norms by individuals *or* an interrogation of the habitual centres of those individuals in light of the constellation of concepts in an over-belief. The mutual interrogation of received cultural values and the affective sense of the self present in the Reformation movement was undertaken to put an end to their estrangement. The difficulty, as Scott Hendrix maintains, came when their doctrinal innovations were confessionalised without reference to their original context. After the fact doctrinal justifications of practical changes were substituted for the agenda of Christianisation responsible for the original re-orientation.<sup>24</sup> The dislocation of the felt sense of self from its cultural and symbolic world began to repeat itself.

One possible solution to this recurring problem is to take up Christianisation as a continuing agenda of interrogation in the service of calling for a form of human attunement centred on Jesus Christ. This cultivation of a sense of self located in an affective experience of Christ leading to a new interest in Christian ways of living is a Christian form of the pragmatic tendency. A continued commitment to this personal and communal interrogation of received norms as a double task of scepticism, in pursuit of a more direct relation to the reality in question, and reconstruction, the communication of that direct relation, is Re-

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24. Hendrix *Recultivating* pp.170-1.

Christianisation understood as a hermeneutic and pragmatic agenda rather than simply a historical phenomenon.

The basic agenda of Re-Christianisation as the response of those caught in the existential situation of a disconnect between piety and the complexes of meaning in everyday life can be adopted and reactivated as an interpretive concept to remedy this disconnect by bringing piety fruitfully into the complexes of everyday meaning. Whatever historical connections and material overlap may or may not develop, Re-Christianisation remains a live hermeneutical option for those in a missionary situation. The modern period represents one such missionary situation.

## *II. The Problem of Reconstruction and the Necessity of Reconstruction*

Lecturing in 1912, Ernst Troeltsch surveyed the unique difficulties for the Christian faith in a time that had lost an established and assumed sense of the world:

'Christianity from the very beginning worked out an agreement between biblical revelation and the "natural" revelation of ancient science, an agreement that lasted until well into the seventeenth century...Our era differs dramatically from all preceding ages, for we can no longer take it for granted that there is *any* universally accepted natural knowledge. Even Catholicism recognises this; that is why its priests must attend anachronistic courses of philosophy in which Aristotle constitutes the chief subject.'<sup>25</sup>

The change handled by Troeltsch in the modern era, a shift away from an antique three-tiered cosmology to a materialist understanding of the universe, was 'actually the re-ordering of the mind-body-world configuration' separating 'us today from

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25. Ernst Troeltsch, *The Christian Faith* trans. Garrett E. Paul (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1991) pp.56-57.

the culture and thought of the pre-modern world...<sup>26</sup> More recently, Charles Taylor has described this movement as one from

'a humanly meaningful one [where] the principle of order in the cosmos was closely related to, often identical with that which gave shape to our lives... Partly as a result of the scientific revolution, the cosmos idea faded, and we find ourselves in a universe [that] is no longer a hierarchy of being, and it doesn't obviously point to eternity as the locus of its principle of cohesion.'<sup>27</sup>

Cosmological revision at the popular level called into question the nature of the relation between revelation and 'ancient science' as well as Christ and the church.<sup>28</sup>

God's presence became increasingly difficult to account for without the explanatory mechanisms of an ordered, hierarchical cosmos. Natural revelation no longer fit; what *was* practically useful *became* theoretically and experientially problematic.

All the same, the modern world, for Troelstch, was not a 'great apostasy,' but a place where God's 'self-attestation' could be recognised.<sup>29</sup> Once the

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26. Oliver Davies *Theology of Transformation* (Oxford: OUP, 2013) p. 39.

27. Charles Taylor *A Secular Age* (Harvard: HUP, 2009) p. 60. cf. 'What was a methodological sin to Aristotle became a recommended virtue in the seventeenth century... The ideal of a system of our entire knowledge founded on one method was born. Aristotle never entertained it; neither did Scholasticism. Indeed the very word 'system' stood, until the seventeenth century, not for a set of interdependent propositions but for a set of thing-for example, *systema mundi* or *systema corporis*.' Amos Funkenstein *Theology and the Scientific Imagination from the Middle Ages to the Seventeenth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986) p. 6 'Because the seventeenth century wished language to become precise and thoroughly transparent, God's omnipresence became a problem. If it could no longer be given a symbolic or metaphorical meaning, how else could the ubiquity of God be understood, God's being 'everywhere'? The problem was compounded by the new commitment of the seventeenth century to a view of nature as thoroughly homogenous and therefore nonhierarchical. God's omnipresence became an almost physical problem for some.' p. 10.

28. On this point see, for instance, Douglas Farrow *Ascension and Ecclesia* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1999), Oliver Davies *Theology of Transformation*, and Henri de Lubac *Corpus Mysticum* trans. Gemma Simmonds CJ (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006). Charles Taylor's argument in *A Secular Age* describes the transition away from a view of human actors integrated in the world to a 'buffered' view of humanity. Alasdair MacIntyre makes a similar point in regard to Western moral reasoning in *After Virtue* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984).

29. 'Shall we, then, treat the modern world as nothing more than a great apostasy? It is no more apostate than any other era. Every age has had its God-slayers, cold intellectual natures are no novelty, and fools like the one who said "I am convinced that God must fear me" cannot be taken as typical of the modern era. We can, on the contrary, clearly recognise God's continuing self-attestation in the modern era as well. But if we do grant the modern era access to our theology, we should do so not in secret, but openly, with full awareness of what we are doing. We shall call a spade a spade.' *The Christian Faith*, p. 34.

established cosmology no longer exerted practical influence on everyday lives, was not 'natural', theology was faced not only with a choice about the status of *this* specific cosmology but with cosmologies, metaphysical systems, and total schemes of explanation more generally.<sup>30</sup> What is the relationship between these world-views—cosmological or metaphysical—and the persistent life of Christian piety? How does Christian piety metabolise various ways of taking the world as it attempts to forge a relatively consistent sense of itself? How does Christian faith Christianise, or not, these emerging views? Troeltsch gives two possible descriptions, which he in turn rejects, of this attempt to relate the scientific world-picture [*Weltbild*] to the more comprehensive and normative worldview [*Gesamtweltanschauung*] of Christianity.<sup>31</sup>

First, the older cosmology, philosophy, and metaphysics can be maintained to support the established religious position, e.g. 'anachronistic courses of philosophy.' This tactic makes religion dependent on a previous scientific worldview or cosmology that can be maintained, *despite* scientific developments, by alienating or inuring itself from any changes in contemporary ways of taking the world. A religious world-picture, however, stands 'independent of any such systematic worldview;' capable of persisting throughout massive theoretical upheavals.<sup>32</sup> Remaining constant, the religious world-picture sacrifices its

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30. 'Therefore, contemporary Christian proclamation is faced with the question whether, when it demands faith from men and women, it expects them to acknowledge this mythical world picture of the past. If this is impossible, it then has to face the question whether the New Testament proclamation has a truth that is independent of the mythical world picture, in which case it would be the task of theology to demythologise the Christian proclamation.' Rudolf Bultmann 'New Testament and Mythology: The Problem of Demythologizing the New Testament Proclamation' in *New Testament & Mythology and Other Basic Writings* trans. and ed. Schubert M. Ogden (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1984) p. 3.

31. Ernst Troeltsch *The Christian Faith* p. 11/*Glaubenslehre nach Heidelberger Vorlesungen aus den Jahren 1911 und 1912* ed Gertrud von le Fort.(Berlin: Duncker and Humboldt, 1925) p. 4.

32. Troeltsch *The Christian Faith*, p. 55.

practical arm to maintain the rest of its body and to exempt itself from touching the stuff of human life. Detached from practical life, this rationalist tactic does not direct human life and is, therefore, unable to acknowledge God's production of effects. The worldview does not have any traction with the world-picture, or vice versa.<sup>33</sup> This tactic of detachment parallels the Reformation move into rigid confessionalisation without reference to the practical situation productive of specific doctrines. It ceases to be sceptical about its own formulations.

Second, religious and scientific or philosophical knowledge can be reduced to the same thing.<sup>34</sup> A 'Christian' cosmology can be developed by fitting theological knowledge into scientific or philosophical single systems in contemporary use. This unity would equate religion with a scientific or philosophical world-picture, whatever philosophy was current. For Troeltsch, philosophy works out the 'basic laws of the spirit' in its theoretical work without worrying about their religious content, but this approach declares those laws religious or theological.<sup>35</sup> The first approach divorced itself from concrete experience, this second approach does not acknowledge the controlling power of either the distinctive Christian concept of God or the Christianness of Christian faith. It allows for the intersection of the spirit of philosophy and the 'holy and gracious God' of religion, but evacuates religion's object to make room for the necessities of the contemporary spirit. This approach

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33. For Troeltsch, in *The Christian Faith* at least, a world-picture [*Weltbild*] is a more restricted and abstract account of the world, e.g. that offered by scientific reflection, while a worldview [*Weltanschauung*] 'strives to connect, organise, and unify its diverse contents, never resting until it has achieved a relatively unified perspective (insofar as this is logically possible).' *The Christian Faith* 11.

34. 'There has been no shortage of attempts to claim that religious knowledge and philosophical knowledge are actually the same thing. The greatest modern attempt to do so was the Hegelian system. For Hegel, religion is nothing other than the affective consciousness of the unity of the world, which theoretical knowledge apprehends as an idea. Religions grasps God poetically according to our imagination, while speculation grasps him scientifically as abstract form.' Troeltsch *The Christian Faith* pp. 59-60.

35. Troeltsch *The Christian Faith* p. 61.

more or less recapitulates the semi-pagan character of Christianity opposed by the Reformers, but assumes that this compromise is a good thing. God does not produce effects in this conception but is the speculative accompaniment of a certain style of philosophy. However unlike philosophy, the religious life involves a personal commitment rather than a drawn out process of reasoning; it is apprehension not comprehension.<sup>36</sup>

Troeltsch dissents from both approaches by calling for the religious and philosophical or scientific approaches to connect critically in individual believers in the formation of a worldview.<sup>37</sup> The new formation develops through a mutual 'living interaction between historical influences and the immediate, though relative, religious productivity of the individual.'<sup>38</sup> Thus, individual experience of the world—personal and sensual life—practically interacts with the abstracting theoretical consciousness as Christians attempt to make plain their religious life, their piety, insofar as possible in terms of newly emergent or regnant theoretical views.<sup>39</sup> The interaction of these two aspects of Christian life is not, as in the first description, a deductive movement or, as in the second description, an inductive one, but, rather, a retroductive operation drawing on 'a variety and diversity of inferences' from historical, scientific, and personal life to produce a committed religious worldview.<sup>40</sup> The canon for these judgments, at least in Christianity, is clear for Troeltsch:

'[This alteration] is accomplished by means of a religious knowledge of God and by the will's formative surrender to God, who encounters us with his essence...in the revelation-history of the prophets through its culmination in Jesus, and from

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36. Troeltsch *The Christian Faith* p. 60.

37. Troeltsch *The Christian Faith* p. 27.

38. Troeltsch *The Christian Faith* p. 27.

39. Troeltsch *The Christian Faith* p. 56-59.

40. Francis Schüssler Fiorenza *Foundational Theology: Jesus and the Church* (New York: Crossroad, 1986) pp. 306-7.

Jesus down to the present. Jesus is thus the centre of the redemptive self-revelation of God.<sup>41</sup>

A religious worldview, a religious world of meaning, emerges when the human person surrenders their will to God, when God becomes a directing force by touching their lives in Jesus Christ, and they are elevated into a kind of freedom from claustrophobic circumstances.<sup>42</sup>

Following Troeltsch, then, the specifically Modern problems of cosmology, science, worldview, etc., can be taken as part of the larger and longer process of Christianity, including individual Christians, working toward 'a normative religious vision of the whole' throughout time without presupposing themselves to possess a totalised worldview.<sup>43</sup> *For the purpose of this thesis, this continual process of criticism, reinterpretation, re-evaluation, and readjustment of life and thought, including faith, in light of the Christian principle can be named as Re-Christianisation. The process of Re-Christianisation, as I will be engaging with it, is an ad hoc pragmatic process retroductively sifting the appropriate elements of Christian piety.* For the remainder of this chapter I will sketch out this pragmatic approach by looking to William James.

### *III. A Brief Description of Pragmatism*

Around the same time as Troeltsch, William James diagnosed the increasing alienation of religious life from the minds of philosophers and scientists: one either finds an insufficiently religious empirical philosophy or an empirically and practically worthless religious philosophy, and 'the conflict between science and

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41. Troeltsch *Christian Faith* p. 63. Also: '...the authentic and classic source of all Christians beliefs is the *personality and proclamation of Jesus*.' 24-25.

42. Troeltsch *The Christian Faith* p. 65-67.

43. Troeltsch *The Christian Faith* p. 62.

religion in full blast.<sup>44</sup> The increasing prevalence of the empirical cast of mind, what James called 'tough-minded' thinkers, forced a retreat of religious thought away from practical life, creating a problematic rationalism depriving religious believers of any guidance in their daily life. Despite these bifurcations, religious experience still provoked Christians to understand their faith amid large cultural transformations. The disjunction of reductive empiricism and rationalism, which James sought to overcome with his pragmatism, made plain the disconnect between scientific cosmology and inherited metaphysics in his time.<sup>45</sup>

In *Pragmatism*, James speaks of his audience's desire to combine the solidity of lived experience with inherited cultural values:

'You want a system that will combine both things, the scientific loyalty to facts and willingness to take account of them, the spirit of adaptation and accommodation, in short, but also the old confidence in human values and the resultant spontaneity, whether of the religious or romantic type.'

The desire remains unfulfilled, however, because

'[y]ou find empiricism with inhumanism and irreligion; or else you find a rationalistic philosophy that indeed may call itself religious, but that keeps out of all definite touch with concrete facts and joys and sorrows.'<sup>46</sup>

One either deals with concrete realities without bringing them into a larger unifying scheme or one develops an abstract rationalist system detached from concrete realities, 'the brutal givens in the context of divine activity.'<sup>47</sup> The desire for synthesis, though, is practically achieved because people eventually perform 'the big summarizing act, and the system stands forthwith over against one like a living thing.'<sup>48</sup> Human beings necessarily possess a sense of what the world means that is

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44. William James *Writings: 1902-1910*. (New York: The Library of America, 1987) p. 493.

45. 'Empiricist writers give him [the amateur philosopher] a materialism, rationalists give him something religious, but to the religion 'actual things are blank.'... [Pragmatism] remains religious like the rationalisms, but at the same time, like the empiricisms, it can preserve the richest intimacy with facts.' William James *Writings: 1902-1910* pp. 500-501.

46. William James *Writings: 1902-1910* p. 495.

47. Ernst Troeltsch *The Christian Faith* p. 62.

48. William James *Writings: 1902-1910* p. 502.



their 'individual way of just seeing and feeling the total push and pressure of the cosmos.'<sup>49</sup> Philosophy and theology, however, do not correspond to these individual ways of taking the world because philosophy and theology either defend an unhelpful dualist deity or deny the ultimate integrity of reality.

In *Theology and the End of Doctrine*, Christine Helmer argues against a similar contemporary theological rationalism in post-liberal theology. For her, there exists a post-liberal strategy wherein theology and doctrine detach from reality in order to ensure the continued viability of Christian religion such that instead 'of describing God as norm, theology and its doctrinal formulations become the norms of belief and practice.'<sup>50</sup> She refers specifically to the work of Bruce Marshall as the exemplar of the post-liberal 'epistemic-advantage model.' She intends her criticisms of Marshall to apply to the larger project of reorienting theology to doctrines as epistemic norms begun in George Lindbeck's *The Nature of Doctrine: Religion and Theology in a Postliberal Age*.<sup>51</sup> On this reading, 'normativity is secured by assigning [doctrine] to the church-creed analytic that has been cut off from any divine transcendent reality. Doctrine has lost its witnessing capacity to the God who might call doctrine into question.'<sup>52</sup> Without a controlling divine referent, doctrines work simply to support a Christian worldview supposedly given in and authorised by Scripture. Scripture, when interpreted in line with certain understandings of established creeds provides specific literary linguistic formulations capable of metabolising any reality or turn of events a person finds him or herself confronted by, even God. Helmer's description of this strategy, then,

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49. William James *Writings: 1902-1910* p. 487.

50 Christine Helmer *Theology and the End of Doctrine* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2014) p. 61.

51. George Lindbeck *The Nature of Doctrine: Religion and Theology in a Postliberal Age* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1984)

52 William James *Writings: 1902-1910* p. 103.

aligns closely with James' characterisation of rationalist or idealist philosophy of religion that has, in the interest of self-preservation, lost 'interest in content or referent' depriving itself of those dialectical relationships inherent in the trying and testing of human life:

'Within the epistemic-advantage model, doctrine has lost its dialectical relationship to Scripture and proclamation. Instead, it has turned into the dogmatism of a *regula fidei* by virtue of asserting its production in the analytic relation between church and creed... Once the church has garnered the prerogative of the truth of a worldview, however, it is cut off from the living possibility of being open to God's word.'<sup>53</sup>

At the other end of the spectrum, one can see a return to the sort of empiricism James describes in certain forms of religious naturalism. Naturalism, 'in the sense of a negative ontological commitment to the nonexistence of anything other than the natural order,' refuses to countenance the possibility of any interaction with God.<sup>54</sup> This form of naturalism, like the epistemic-advantage model, does not leave room for religion to be a witness to an independent reality capable of judging or adjusting that witness. They both sequester and protect religion in different ways. Another option, though, is a form of naturalism that feels free to offer causal descriptions of religion in the same manner as descriptions of other aspects of human nature, that is willing to describe 'the experience of [God's] action, however that experience is obtained.'<sup>55</sup> James' pragmatism, then, might offer a resource to theology by picking a way out of this deadlock by supposing there to be room for God's causal touch in human life.

While speaking to his early 20<sup>th</sup> century audience, James describes the loss of integrity between the everyday life and certain totalising conceptual schemes,

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53 Helmer *Theology and the End of Doctrine* p. 104.

54. Andrew Dole *Schleiermacher on Religion and the Natural Order* (Oxford: OUP, 2010) p. 8.

55. Austin Farrer *Faith and Speculation: An Essay in Philosophical Theology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1967) p. 32.

e.g. cosmology or metaphysics, with contemporary interest. The problem, for James, behind this instability in philosophy and theology is the attempt to think of truth as a copy of reality reproducing reality in a conceptual or semantic system, a world-formula.<sup>56</sup> The solution to this problem is a way of talking about truth that has three characteristics: first, concepts or propositions that are capable of being conformed to reality; second, coherence with other conformed concepts and established beliefs; third, accordance with the will in its drive for integration and moral action.<sup>57</sup> James offers up his pragmatism as a solution and counterproposal to both irreligious empiricism and detached religious rationalism:

'if you follow the pragmatic method, you cannot look on any such word as closing your quest. You must bring out each word its practical cash-value, set it at work within the stream of your experience. It appears less as a solution, then, than as a program for more work, and more particularly as an indication of the ways in which existing realities may be *changed*.'<sup>58</sup>

Theories, principles, categories and 'solving names' function as instruments within a person's orientation to the world as he or she moves towards 'last things, fruits, consequences, facts' in his or her response to the world.<sup>59</sup>

James' pragmatic approach to working out knowledge through human encounter with the world in large respects mirrors more recent understandings of the extended mind.<sup>60</sup> The organism-environment coupling productive of meaning

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56. In answering these questions [about the agreement of ideas with reality] the pragmatists are more analytic and painstaking, the intellectualists more offhand and irreflective. The popular notion is that a true idea must copy its reality.' William James *Writings 1902-1910*, pp. 572-573 'The whole function of philosophy ought to be to find out what definite difference it will make to you and to me, at definite instants of our life, if this world-formula or that world-formula be the true one.' William James *Writings: 1902-1910* p. 508.

57. My summary of James' solution mirrors Eugene Rogers' description of Thomas Aquinas' view of faith. *Thomas Aquinas and Karl Barth: Sacred Doctrine and the Natural Knowledge of God*. (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995) p. 166. Rogers, in turn, is looking to Bruce Marshall's essay 'Aquinas as Postliberal Theologian' *Thomist: A Speculative Quarterly Review* 53.3 (July 1, 1989) 353-402. David Burrell notes a similar parallel in *Aquinas: God & Action* (Scranton, PA: University of Scranton Press, 2008) pp. 180-182.

58. William James *Writings: 1902-1910* p. 509.

59. William James *Writings: 1902-1910* p. 510.

60. The phrase of course calls to mind Andy Clark and David J. Chalmers 'The Extended Mind.' *Analysis* (58: 1998) pp.7-19.

involves a relationship not just between the discursive or loquacious level of the person and her environment but includes a ‘corporeal encounter with [her] environment.’<sup>61</sup> ‘Visceral forms of information highlight affective significance of events... After all, it is my bodily experience, but the range of what we share through our common genetic and cultural background makes all the difference.’<sup>62</sup> By incorporating the body *and* the cultural world into his understanding of understanding, James was able to develop something like a realist phenomenology without bracketing or reducing the external world where objects are handled. The intentional aspects of human consciousness are assumed in the process of knowing because they are found in experience as parts of the material world; they are not simply made up by the ‘mind.’<sup>63</sup> The interpretive anticipations encoded into inherited systems of symbols are at work in the body as it navigates the world with relative success, and these systems include metaphysical or religious commitments.<sup>64</sup> Focussing on the body as an integral, if not *the* integral, participant in the dynamic of the formation of piety allows for a relatively naturalist explanation of the development of piety in non-reductive historical and cultural terms. Religion, as a potentially universal symbolic scheme, is a site of universal

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61. Mark Johnson *The Meaning of the Body: Aesthetics of Human Understanding*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007) p. 25.

62. Jay Schulkin *Bodily Sensibility: Intelligent Action* (Oxford: OUP, 2003) p. 129. But the correlation cannot be taken as complete: ‘I admire the work of William James, as should be clear... But he is wholly fallible, like the rest of us. A statement such as ‘Cognition is a function of consciousness...’ is but one of many wrong-headed statements.’ Schulkin *Bodily Sensibility* p. 121.

63. The connection between James, realist phenomenology, and cognitive science is made by Aaron Massecar in ‘How Pragmatism and Realist Phenomenology Can Bring Cognitive Science Back into Philosophy’ *William James Studies* (12:1) pp. 36-46. A more fulsome argument, with use of other pragmatist thinkers as well, of the compatibility of non-reductive naturalism and realist thought in James is Michael R. Slater *Pragmatism and the Philosophy of Religion* (Cambridge: CUP, 2016)

64. ‘The hypothesis is that bodily representations informs cortical sites in anticipating future consequences for actions.’ Schulkin *Bodily Sensibility* p. 97.

cooperation between human persons in time and space as they construct the necessary responses to create and to handle various spaces in the world.<sup>65</sup>

Unsurprisingly, then, James, at least in *Pragmatism*, does think metaphysical concepts can be put to practical use as instruments in such a way that decisions can be made about their truthfulness.<sup>66</sup> Truthfulness is a function of the way ideas derived from our experience allow us to hold together the disparate aspects of our human experience, and new ideas are true as they allow us to accept novel experiences *in line with our established beliefs*.<sup>67</sup> Concepts, ideas, and theories serve the human attempt to make sense out of reality, to have a view of the world, which in turn do not come from 'the loquacious level which rationalism inhabits' but, instead, from our 'habitual centre of [...] personal energy'.<sup>68</sup> The habitual centre, one's fundamental concern and orientation, determined by inherited concepts and the pressure of the universe on human beings allows for the flux and flow of life to be handled.<sup>69</sup> The driving force in life is negotiated in the course of a human life, but is not entirely under human control.

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65. 'Such a project [of understanding human niche construction in terms of religion] may potentially have value today in highlighting the creative tensions which can exist between the self-communicating inclusivity of 'social place' and 'hyper-place' on the one hand, and between both 'social place' and 'hyper-place' and the sometimes militarized territorial boundaries that sectorize the planet on the other. This points to a contrast between the politics of deep community and the politics of the nation state. We can ask the question of what we can learn about the formation of global solidarity from world religions, and indeed about the religious deformations which occur, for instance, where the claim to limitless territory entails the eradication of compassionate 'social place', in the failed production of 'hyper-place'?' Oliver Davies 'Niche Construction, Social Cognition, and Language: Hypothesizing the Human as the Production of Place' *Culture and Brain* (3 September 2016) p. 22.

66. 'The pragmatic method is primarily a method of settling metaphysical disputes that otherwise might be interminable.' William James *Writings: 1902-1910* p. 506.

67. William James *Writings: 1902-1910* pp. 512-514. 'In this perspective, the reasonableness of a religion is largely a function of its assimilative powers, of its ability to provide an intelligible interpretation in its own terms of the varied situations and realities adherents encounter.' George Lindbeck *The Nature of Doctrine* 131.

68. William James *Writings: 1902-1910* pp. 73, 183.

69. Compare with Troeltsch: 'It is the same as with an individual person: there is a general striving of the will, a central drive that produces a unity of life, that holds the myriad fragments of our existence together. In the depths of our unconscious there lies a primal and basic unity, which, despite all the catastrophes that threaten to tear us apart, preserves an inner direction from the beginning--until the day that comes when we learn, to our surprise, that there is just

'Unpicturable beings' and metaphysical concepts are able to affect human action and understanding in two ways: as means of interacting with objective reality and through effects on non-rational levels of the human person.

For James, human experience consists of subjective and objective parts, 'the objective part is the sum total of whatsoever at any given time we may be thinking of, the subjective part is the inner 'state' in which the thinking comes to pass.'<sup>70</sup> Human experience perceives a 'full fact' through a combination of this inner conscience, a felt or thought object, an attitude towards the object, and a sense of self.<sup>71</sup> The objective element interacts with the physical senses, the inner dispositions or habits of the human person, and their larger interpretive way of taking the world in general.<sup>72</sup> The final elements in this assemblage are people's 'over-beliefs,' intellectual ideas or dispositions affecting the possible range of human experience. To illustrate his point, James gives the example of a woman raised in a Christian household who remained unable to make sense of Christian life until she encountered a version of Christian belief in Spiritualism, which gave her an over-belief wherein sin and forgiveness became gripping, live options for handling her life.<sup>73</sup>

Constraining over-beliefs, our integrative agenda or orientation, these unpicturable beings determine a person's attitude towards the world and the way in

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such a unity in our own life, a life in which we have become what we are. There is such a primal unity in Christianity, too, and its development is nothing but the germination of this kernel. That is what we need to analyse.' *The Christian Faith* 65.

70. William James *Writings: 1902-1910* p. 446.

71. William James *Writings: 1902-1910* p. 447.

72. 'Everything we know is 'what' it is by sharing in the nature of one of these abstractions. We can never look directly at them, for they are bodiless and featureless and footless, but we grasp all other things by their means, and in handling the real world we should be stricken with helplessness in just so far forth as we might lose those mental objects, these adjectives and adverbs and predicates and heads of classification and conception.' William James *Writings: 1902-1910* pp. 57-58.

73. William James *Writings: 1902-1910* pp. 459-460 n. 1.

which objects come to us.<sup>74</sup> These over-beliefs do not, however, lead to subjective solipsism; they are capable of correction. Indeed, James' entire argument in *Pragmatism* is premised on the fact that metaphysical over-beliefs *can* be evaluated by their practical application: '[t]he pragmatic method is primarily a method of settling metaphysical disputes that otherwise might be interminable.'<sup>75</sup> 'So, over-beliefs, which are 'rules for action,' can be found either to lead to undesirable actions or lack coherence with the person's encounter with the world.'<sup>76</sup> Both of these difficulties call for revision of the over-beliefs to be more in line with other beliefs that provide 'greater vital benefits.'<sup>77</sup> In other words, when faced with over-beliefs ill-fitted to other over-beliefs, say a religious cosmology and a scientific one, it is possible to revise, drop, or invent an entirely new over-belief or aspects of one to allow for an integrated sense of the world. Judgments about what beliefs ought to be revised, though, will involve an interaction between the objects encountered and the determination of the inner conscious.

This revision allows the sense of the world, the worldview, to exert reasonable influence on theoretical accounts of the world. Although much Christianity works at this level of over-belief, 'the prevalent attitude of the believer, is in general exerted by the instrumentality of pure ideas,' a person's habitual centre, 'the hot place in a man's consciousness,' affects the drive for unification in thought

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74. 'Unpicturable beings are realised, and realised with an intensity almost like that of an hallucination. They determine our vital attitude as decisively as the vital attitude of lovers are determined by the habitual sense, by which each is haunted, of the other being in the world.' William James *Writings: 1902-1910* p. 72.

75. William James *Writings: 1902-1910* p. 506.

76. 'In other words, the greatest enemy of any one of our truths may be the rest of our truths. Truths have once for all this desperate instinct of self-preservation and of desire to extinguish whatever contradicts them.' William James *Writings: 1902-1910* p. 521.

77. William James *Writings: 1902-1910* p. 520. '[I]deas (which themselves are but parts of our experience) become true just in so far as they help us to get into satisfactory relation with other parts of our experience, to summarise them and get about among them by conceptual short-cuts instead of following the interminable success of particular phenomena.' William James *Writings: 1902-1910* p. 512.

from below or beyond this loquacious level.<sup>78</sup> Regardless of how psychology or neurology might conceive of this experiential touch, there is a positive religious attunement at work in believers through '*a wider self through which saving experiences come*, a positive content of religious experience which, it seems to me, *is literally and objectively true so far as it goes*.'<sup>79</sup> The unseen or unpicturable can be communed with by the believer, and not necessarily the Christian believer for James, who changes as a result at the practical level of conduct and everyday life.<sup>80</sup>

The self who communes with a higher being, reality, absolute, or whatever in prayer finds himself affected in such a way that his way of taking the world changes: his subjective encounter points towards this larger objectivity. The encounter with the larger objectivity pushes the person to maintain the truth of his personal view beyond himself. James is worth quoting in full at this point:

'Only when this farther step of faith concerning God is taken, and remote objective consequences are predicted [i.e. final things], does religion...get wholly free from the first immediate subjective experience, and bring a real hypothesis into play. A good hypothesis in science must have other properties than those of the phenomenon it is immediately to explain, otherwise it is not prolific enough. God, meaning only what enters into the religious man's experience of union, falls short of being an hypothesis of this more useful order. He needs to enter into wider cosmic relations in order to justify the subject's absolute confidence and peace.'<sup>81</sup>

The object effecting change in the one who worships, prays, or contemplates becomes objective as something related to the cosmos, as something more than the subjectively experienced other of religion, and beyond, above, or below the loquacious level. The movement into universality of a person's sense of God, wherever it comes from, is its claim to be true.<sup>82</sup>

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78. William James *Writings: 1902-1910* p. 55, 183.

79. William James *Writings: 1902-1910* p. 460.

80. William James *Writings: 1902-1910* pp. 460-1.

81. William James *Writings: 1902-1910* p. 462.

82. See the discussion of Edward Schillebeeckx *Jesus: An Experiment in Christology* trans. Hubert Hoskins (London: Collins, 1979) pp. 31-33 on the need for truth to push towards the universal if it is to be more than enthusiasm.



On this reading, pragmatism can modestly be defined as the agenda of integrating and testing received cultural values through their practical testing in relation to some program of work and objective experience. Now, I will relate this brief characterisation of pragmatism to more specifically Christian ways of living. While the Reformers would not have adopted the specifics of James' method, e.g. over-beliefs or full facts, the basic structure of the method can be seen in their work as the bringing home of God's work to the Christian life.

#### *IV. Pragmatism, Piety, and Doctrine*

James' pragmatism gives us a way to make judgments about the truthfulness of over-beliefs. Judgments about Christianness, the Christian character of over-beliefs require one to understand 'what one is judging,' an understanding dependent on an acquaintance with the object in question.<sup>83</sup> Truthfulness and Christianness have to do with the handling of certain realities in ways appropriate to their content and not necessarily according to certain rules, even if those inherited rules are the means of approach.<sup>84</sup> A pragmatic Re-Christianisation of Christian piety effects a full fact in James' sense: a sense of self, a felt object, and an understanding of the object.

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83. Charles M. Wood *The Formation of Christian Understanding: Theological Hermeneutics* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock: 1993) p. 83.

84. '[Doctrine] has to do with the living reality of God. Doctrine presses toward knowledge and truth while at the same time remaining cognisant of its human origins and historical particularity... If theology is about the realities of personhood, of God, and of intersubjectivity,...then its mandate is to be concerned with historical and religious content rather than being preoccupied by questions of method.' Christine Helmer *Theology and the End of Doctrine* p.165.

The 'wider self,' the self below the loquacious level, determined by the location of the person orients the person to the world by supplying a centre of action, and this centre of action pushes an engagement with the world wherein various over-beliefs are validated, verified, and corrected. As a unification of experience through over-beliefs *and* attention to effective forces, religion is derived from 'concrete facts and joys and sorrows.'<sup>85</sup> Relating the particularities of the person's experience of the push and pull of reality to others and to the larger world is, following James, the means of ascertaining the truth of an understanding of the determination of the 'wider self.' The ability of reflective over-beliefs to deal with the wider world imposes a limitation on what concepts it can make use of. The requirements of the stream of human experience impose limits on what can be pragmatically maintained as true.

Making sense or working out the truth does not consist in the development of a conceptual world-formula, an infallible metaphysics, or a semantic system, instead it comes about through a response to various pressures, commitments, and patterns of life through which the human person deals with reality. The reality of the experiential pressure exerted on the believer by God-in-Christ leads to the adoption of a certain given pattern of life wherein Christianness and truthfulness can be practically verified, and are the same thing. This appropriation is the task of Christianisation as the cultivation of a sense of self resultant from the felt object of Christ impinging on a person's dispositions and historical location.

For the purposes of this thesis, I will, therefore, take Christian piety as a Christian's task of working out her authentic life as a response to *both* a commitment to the possibilities of transformation enacted by God in Christ *and* an

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85. William James *Writings: 1902-1910* p. 495.

acceptance of the given state of the world as the place where this transformation must take place. Christian piety is a personal commitment, a committed existence, to the given norms made known in Jesus Christ and continued in 'the organic and visible expression of the life of the Spirit in the Church.'<sup>86</sup> The commitment of Christian piety makes sense by accepting and working to transform the concrete circumstances it faces.<sup>87</sup> Piety is a way of being a self in the real world. Christian piety as a way of being a person in the world, then, can be thought to operate in relation to three poles: a certain attitude towards the world, the Christian community, and everyday existence. This mirrors James way of thinking of a full fact as a combination of inner conscious, a felt object, an attitude towards the object, and a sense of self.<sup>88</sup>

On this way of thinking, truthfulness has to do with the 'content' of living realities made known, if only partially, in human conceptual schemes, structures, and over-beliefs. Truths, then, are not functions of their place in a structure or over-belief. Instead, they retain a degree of freedom from these over-beliefs and integrative agendas. At the same time, however, these over-beliefs and agendas do approximate to these realities as human beings variously bring together these truths together in, hopefully, more harmonious schemes. The Christianness of this hopefully increasingly truthful agenda has to do with the integration of this content

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86. John Meyendorff *Living Tradition: Orthodox Witness in the Contemporary World* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1978) p. 21.

87. John Macquarrie describes the character of this committed existence: 'A committed existence is one that has in view some master possibility. In consistently directing itself on this master possibility, the other possibilities of life are subordinated to it and the movement is toward unified selfhood...Acceptance is the retrospective view of the self's unity, for it has to do with what has been, with the situation that already obtains and in which we find ourselves. If anything like unified selfhood is to be reached, the facticity of the situation has to be accepted in its entirety, with no loose ends rejected. Only if there is this frank and total acceptance can the commitment in turn be a realistic one.' John Macquarrie *Principles of Christian Theology* (London: SCM Press, 1977) pp. 77-78.

88. William James *Writings: 1902-1910*, p. 447.

around Jesus of Nazareth, who himself holds together the reality being dealt with in everyday life.<sup>89</sup> The human process of meaning initiated in Jesus Christ, through all its twists and turns, holds open the possibility of uniting these various *human* instances of working out various truths in a source of meaning, God, capable of marrying them together.

### *V. Agenda*

In this chapter I have shown the vectors I will be using to approach the major theological works of Richard Hooker, *The Lawes of Ecclesiasticall Politie*, and Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Der Christliche Glaube*: pragmatism and the Re-Christianisation project. These approaches will allow me to see how they adjusted the inherited over-beliefs and symbolic structures of their time and place to a central source of meaning, God acting in Christ, *without* making use of a common cosmological or metaphysical system. Hooker and Schleiermacher both participated in the reform of their churches, as well as in the debate about this reform. They inherited both a set of doctrines forged in the earlier reform of the church and an adherence to the agenda responsible for those doctrines. Both clearly

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89. I am here paraphrasing the point of view described by Cornelius Ernst: 'The substantive ('ontic') answer to this question [the meaning of the historical progression of various theologies] we already have in Jesus Christ, and can have no other. It is the ('ontological') meaning of this substantive meaning we must continually search for without expecting a final answer... What 'structure' could it [i.e. the ontological meaning] have in a single mind? In fact it could only exist as a total human culture, the progressive discovery of a single human identity in Christ as the historic process of the diverse but related processes of self-discovery going on in distinct cultures all over the globe in response to the challenge and threat of a uniform technological mass-culture.' Cornelius Ernst *Multiple Echo* eds. Fergus Kerr OP and Timothy Radcliffe OP (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2006) p. 85.

adhered to the definite aims of this agenda, the clear goal of union with Christ effected by God in God's gracious priority, while remaining reserved about the precise practical means for obtaining this agenda and incredulous of final comprehensive formulations. This skepticism of a conclusive doctrinal edifice is theological: following from their real commitment to the reality of development and learning in the Christian life and their awareness of human sinfulness.

Going forward, this thesis will show how Hooker and Schleiermacher produced meaningful and responsible Christian speech in their appropriation of the Christian faith. The existential dynamic of the pragmatic process of Re-Christianisation, '[the] living interaction between historical influences and the immediate, though relative, religious productivity of the individual,' will be seen as the grammar of their accounts of Church reform. Four basic points will need to be shown in relation to each thinker. First, I will take up their own sense of their place in the Reformation movement of Re-Christianisation; they must have a sense of the task. Second, the sense of dislocation or lack of fit between over-beliefs or reflective worldviews and the actual God-willed order of reality will be shown; they must have something to go from. Third, the contours of the experiential pressure exerted by Jesus Christ, the edges of the felt object, on the believer's life must be limned; they must have a sense of the object. Fourth, the productive response of believers to this pressure will need to be exhibited as a practical change rather than a solving name; they must show the difference the object *makes*.

I will devote three chapters to Richard Hooker and four to Friedrich Schleiermacher. The scheme for reading them, however, will follow the same basic outline. First, I will position them within the Reformation movement as those committed to its agenda of Re-Christianisation without committing themselves to

a detached confessionalism out of touch with 'concrete facts and joys and sorrows.' Their major works both fall within their attempt to provide an account of church life against 'idealist' confessionalism and so will be my primary source for both theologians. Then, I will turn to the presence of the formative dynamic of piety in these writings. The dynamic will be shown to begin with an encounter with God at a pre-reflective level as a principle ordering reality in a certain way. Whether thematised or not, this knowledge gives inadequate direction to its human possessor while still constraining him or her in various ways. The orientation changes, however, under the new constraint of the historical person Jesus of Nazareth who is encountered as a directing agency in the life of the church on account of the specifics of his historic life. Finally, this encounter with Christ's agency brings the believer into a testing of received doctrine in the reading of Scripture as it does or does not allow for James' 'full fact.' Ingredient in both these approaches, despite their differing political, cultural, metaphysical, and cosmological commitments, is the reality of God's agency in Christ to affect the habitual centre of human beings, to operate on them below the loquacious level. Beneath the formal and terminological differences, the same material movement is occurring: Re-Christianisation in the present tense. Finally, I will return to the issues raised in this introduction to set out the hermeneutic of Re-Christianisation displayed in their work as a contemporary resource.

## Chapter 2. Hooker as Reformer

### *I. Hooker and Re-Christianisation*

The purpose of this chapter is to locate Hooker with reference to the agenda of Re-Christianisation. The first section of this chapter will, therefore, describe the historical situation of Hooker's *Lawes*. In turn, the second chapter will concentrate on Hooker's concept of law as a rule for action developed in response to divine agential pressure, a pragmatic conception. The third will apply this approach to the work of Christ in the Christian life.

To place Hooker within the English Reformation, I will explore some formative tensions in his theology. My intention is not to give exhaustive overviews of these tensions or to relieve them. Rather, they are the necessary departure points for reading Hooker, who himself was insistent on the need to attend to the transmission of ideas and setting of human action. Contemporary expositors of Hooker's thought often try to place him in a ready at hand contemporary theological or political camp, e.g. Reformed or Thomist, to make those ideas normative now or to fill in the gaps in Hooker's own thoughts. Hooker's theological commitments, however, 'refuse to be classified once and for all as simple 'conservative' or 'radical,' and that aspects of what is undeniably a local polemic, very much of its time and place, set off chains of reflection with an uncomfortable contemporary edge.'<sup>90</sup> The difficulty of his theology follows from his refusal to divorce the objectivity of what we know from the 'recognition of

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90. Rowan Williams *Anglican Identities* (Darton, Longman, and Todd: London, 2011) pp. 55-56.

responsive creativity in persons' who are morally responsible for their decisions. The necessity of this pragmatic connection in his account of formation requires his more in-depth account of the human navigation of 'law' forms human piety generally. My approach to this interpretive problem will be simply to locate him within the widespread impulse to return to Christocentric piety rather than attempting to assimilate him to some specific Continental version of the reform movement. Finally, I will turn to some of the specifics of the contest responsible for Hooker taking up *The Lawes of Ecclesiasticall Polity*.<sup>91</sup> This argument will briefly illustrate Hooker's own views on the nature of Reformation and of the key issue of justification without attempting to assimilate them to other models. Taken together these factors draw out the distinctive tensions in Hooker's thought. Once these two factors have been explored the specifically Christian regime of the formation of piety in the church will be drawn out in the third chapter of this section.

## *II. The Place of Richard Hooker*

While it is possible to reconstruct the timeline of Hooker's life with a fair amount of detail, it is difficult to chart the trajectory of the development of his theological views in biographical terms for two reasons.<sup>92</sup>

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91. *The Lawes* will be cited as *Lawes* by book, chapter, and paragraph number followed by volume, page and line numbers from the critical Folger Library Edition of Hooker's writings. The sermons preached by Hooker will be cited by a short form of their title and paragraph number followed by volume, page, and line numbers from the Folger Edition.

92. Philip Secor highlights the twin problems with Hooker's biography as his contemporary obscurity and 'the paucity of hard facts about him in his own day.' Hooker is obscure to the popular imagination, but still plays a significant role in thinking about 'Anglicanism' today. see Philip Secor 'In Search of Richard Hooker' in *Richard Hooker and the Construction of Christian Community*. ed. McGrade, Arthur Stephen. (Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies: Tempe, 1997).



First, Hooker did not leave behind an extensive personal record in the form of correspondence or journals that might flesh out a picture of his life.<sup>93</sup> Lacking definite evidence, biographies characterise Hooker through the qualities of his writing, especially the *Lawes*, the general temper of his thought, and the personal alliances Hooker formed throughout his career.<sup>94</sup> Indirect characterisation of Hooker, through texts or friendships he maintained, does not take adequate account of the way in which his irenicism *may* be a rhetorical tactic in his attack on the Puritans or the complexity of his relationships with his friends and students. 'This friendship [with George Cranmer] was not as 'sacred,' 'blessed,' or 'spiritual' as [his early biographer Izaak] Walton wanted to believe. Convenience had its part.'<sup>95</sup> The studied placidity of his works may be a move within a larger strategy of conformist clergy to oppose the Puritans<sup>96</sup>, even if his association of the Puritans with Anabaptists is not without merit.<sup>97</sup> Nor can his works be straightforwardly related to other roughly contemporary writers in the Church of England at that time. Hooker's works were maintained by those he had various personal connections to such as Lancelot Andrewes, but he would be invoked by the Puritan John Owen against the conformist William Sherlock.

Second is the question of Hooker's place in the Church of England in his day and his place in Anglicanism now. This hagiography can take the form of either

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93. The most recent modern biography of Hooker by Philip Secor, for instance, explores Hooker's early life through official school records and typical descriptions of university life. See, e.g., Philip Secor *Richard Hooker: Prophet of Anglicanism* (Burnes and Oates: Turnbridge Wells, 2001).

94. On the contrasting views of Hooker's elevation to the Temple, specifically as a move by a determined group of conformist clergy, see Olivier Loyer's summary of the scholarship in *L'Anglicanisme de Richard Hooker* (Paris, 1997) pp. 10-12.

95. Olivier Loyer *L'Anglicanisme* p. 10. He continues: 'La "conviction religieuse", l'inclination vers l'étude" s'alliaient et peut-être se subordonnaient chez eux à un sens clair de l'action."

96. On this point see W. D. J. Cargill Thompson, 'The Philosopher of the "Politie Society": Richard Hooker as a Political Thinker', *Studies in Richard Hooker: Essays Preliminary to an Edition of his Work*, ed. W. S. Hill (Cleveland, 1972 )

97. Nigel Voak *Richard Hooker and Reformed Theology* (OUP, 2003) p. 235.

a stress upon the continuity of Hooker's thought with earlier English theologians such as Jewel and Whitgift or his genius in constituting something called 'Anglicanism.' Peter Lake, for instance, sees Hooker's valorisation as an attempt to cover his originality: '

Walton's account served to hide the discontinuities and disjunctions between Hooker and previous English protestant thought and thus to suppress the striking originality of the *Polity*. Yet Hooker undoubtedly deserves his place in 'anglican' hagiography - not because he personified or expressed existing 'anglican' attitudes and values but because he, more than any one, invented them.<sup>98</sup>

The fact that Hooker's elevation to 'patron saint of 'anglicanism" came after the Laudian ascendancy and the restoration argues for a later desire to take Hooker as a theological genius.

Arguing today for Hooker's decisive role in the formation of Anglican identity involves at the same time a claim about the very nature of that identity. The variations on Hooker's genius contest the nature of the identity he created or exemplified. These permutations cover a wide range of viewpoints: mainstream magisterial Reformer,<sup>99</sup> instigator of a liberal method<sup>100</sup>, a scholastic out of season<sup>101</sup>, a typical Elizabethan Calvinist<sup>102</sup> and an exponent of a patristic theology of participation.<sup>103</sup> The different versions of Hooker owe something to the desires and training of the different writers as well as the fragmentary nature of Hooker's own work.<sup>104</sup>

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98. Peter Lake *Anglican and Puritans? Presbteryianism and English Conformist Thought from Whitgift to Hooker* (London, Unwin Hyman: 1988) p. 230.

99. Nigel Atkinson *Richard Hooker and the Authority of Scripture, Reason and Tradition* (Regent College: Vancouver, 2005) and W.J. Torrance Kirby 'Richard Hooker as an Apologist for the Magisterial Reformation' in *RHCCC*.

100. H.R. McAdoo *The Spirit of Anglicanism* (Black: London, 1965).

101. Nigel Voak *Richard Hooker and Reformed Theology*.

102. Bryan Spinks *Two Faces of Elizabethan Anglican Theology: Sacraments and Salvation in the Thought of William Perkins and Richard Hooker* (Lanham, Md., 1999 )

103. A.M. Allchin *Participation in God* (Morehouse-Barlow: Wilton, Conn, 1988)

104. 'Ainsi, on affronte un paradoxe. Les historiens au fait de la pensée médiévale et familiers de son langue reconnaissent sans peine la dette de Hooker envers les siècles qui le précèdent, tandis que les historiens des idées modernes, eux, fidèles en définitive à l'ancienne lecture, contiennent souvent à voir en lui une lumière nouvelle.' Olivier Loyer *L'Anglicanisme* p. 686.

The incompleteness of Hooker's work, owing to occasional composition, unfinished final books, and actual marginality, tends to lead interpreters to supplant or conceptually elucidate his work with other sources who allow his identity to be filled out. In *Richard Hooker and Reformed Theology*, for instance, Nigel Voak uses Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus to map the scholastic shape of Hooker's anthropology; Nigel Atkinson allies Hooker's thought just as strongly to simplified contemporary Protestant commitments in *Richard Hooker and the Authority of Scripture, Reason and Tradition* through a comparison to John Calvin and Martin Luther.<sup>105</sup> Almost all of these figures, though, were known and used by Hooker in a qualified sense, which is to say *he did not view himself as completely overlapping with any of them but as examples of views he personally holds*, and it is odd to reduce his thought to them. The attempt to place Hooker in relation to Anglicanism as Luther and Calvin are to their respective traditions goes against Hooker's own theological methodology:

'This in every profession hath too much authorized the judgements of a few. This with Germans hath caused Luther, and with many other Churches, Calvin to prevaile in all thinges. Yet are we not able to define, whether the wisdom of that God (who setteth before us in holy Scripture so many admirable paternes of vertue, and no one of them without somewhat noted wherin they were culpable, to the end that him alone it might alwayes be acknowledged, Thou only art holy thoe onely art just) might not permit those worthy vessels of his glory to be in some things blemished with the staine of humaine frailtie, even for this cause, least we should esteeme of any man above that which behoveth.' (*Lawes Preface*.IV.8. I.26)

This self-description bears out the detailed work done by A.J. Joyce on Hooker's qualified use of Thomas Aquinas:

'It is clear that Hooker undoubtedly draws upon Aquinas in some significant respects, although he is in no sense an uncritical adherent to, or disciple of, Thomism: he follows Aquinas closely where he supports his wisdom and insight on a given subject; yet he has no compunction in disagreeing with him overtly

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105. Others such as Peter Lake and Nicholas Tyacke find a basis of emerging Arminian theology in Richard Hooker.

when he believes him to be in error. In matters of scholarship, it would appear that Hooker is always ultimately 'his own man.'<sup>106</sup>

The interpretive problem of placing Hooker in continuity or discontinuity with previous and contemporary theologies is precisely the problem Hooker himself confronts in accounting for unity of the church across time and space apart from an exhaustive articulate conceptual consensus. These difficulties can be minimised if Hooker's own account of his influences, goals in his occasional writing, and the nature of the church's continuity with the past are given priority in reconstructing his views. The seemingly paradoxical overlap with both medieval and Reformed sources makes sense in light of Hooker's account of church unity. Hooker's religious criticism takes as its rationale his defence of the lay piety practiced in England *at that time and in previous generations*. The salvific work of God in Christ provides the foundation for his account of the unity of the church and the believer's own personal identity *including his own*. The Christological emphasis of this conception of ecclesial and personal unity prevents him from writing himself, or anyone else, too centrally into the Christian dogmatic system.<sup>107</sup> While I will place Hooker's major work in its historical location, my intention, unlike much contemporary work, will be to approach Hooker as 'his own man' assembling a theology *ad hoc* from an eclectic range of sources.

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106. A.J. Joyce *Richard Hooker and Anglican Moral Theology* (OUP: Oxford, 2012) p. 196. I am here siding more with Joyce against those readings of Hooker that attempt to fill out his system by grafting in aspects of patristic and Thomist theology. The most impressive example of this approach is Charles Miller's *Richard Hooker and the Vision of God*. Miller matches Hooker much more closely than Joyce to Aquinas despite admitting that 'Aquinas' influence is not straightforward, as references throughout this study reveal.' Charles Miller *Richard Hooker and the Vision of God: Exploring the Origins of 'Anglicanism'* (James Clarke & Co: Cambridge, 2013). cf. Loyer's summary of Hooker's use of Aristotle, Plato, Neo-Platonism, and Augustine in describing 'la montée du désir vers Dieu': 'Bref, Hooker brode sur un lieu commun, nourri de sources diverses qu'il est sans doute impossible de démêler avec exactitude.' *L'Anglicanisme* p. 237.

107. If, then, he 'invents' Anglicanism it is not by creating a monolithic theological system. Instead, he argues for an agile form of Christian belief engaged with, not defined by, various human attempts to make meaning of the world throughout time capable of arguing for church continuity despite various metaphysical allegiances.

Unlike those mentioned above, my motivation for reading Hooker is not to pin down his sources or to advocate his material position as normative in the present time. Rather, I am interested in the process whereby he attempts to return to the foundations and principles constraining Christian life and theology in order to provide a rationale for Christian practices. How does Hooker return to the dynamic source of Christian life, Jesus Christ, in the course of the project of Re-Christianisation, the reconnection of the formative power of Christian belief with everyday life? The dynamic of this formation and reconnection will emerge as a pragmatic one responding to real forces, a hermeneutic reconstruction in light of his present day.

### *III. Hooker as Reformer*

To approach Hooker's understanding of his place in the church reform movement in England, I begin with the presenting problem of his argument with the extreme or radical Puritans at the Temple Church. The following section will develop a reading of Hooker's methodological commitments to account for his allegiance to the Reformation, the received church order, and an understanding of community not premised upon straightforward conceptual consensus.

In Hendrix's terms from the last chapter, Hooker became active as a public theologian at the time of confessionalisation in the Church of England. His contention with the Puritans centred on the confessional limits of the Church of England as it received the various confessional documents adopted during this time. For Hooker, English Re-Christianization was a part of the larger realignment of Christian piety in the European Reformation, but a part that possessed its own identity and integrity. The publicly received doctrines of the Reformation in England determined the goals, tactics, and forms of this new Christocentric piety

rather than a foreign standard. His reply to the Puritans would include a reworking of the fundamental issues at stake in both elite theology and popular crises. Eventually, he would argue for the importance of a set of diverse, mystical, and non-conceptual relationships within the church over a conceptually exhaustive map of church life.

#### A. 'Confession' in the Church of England

The confessionalisation of the English Reformation produced the thirty-nine *Articles of Religion*,<sup>108</sup> the two books of homilies to be read in churches, and a series of prayer books.<sup>109</sup> These documents in turn set the limits of belief and the agenda of the Reformation in England during Hooker's time. The *Articles* began as thirteen articles drafted in response to negotiations concerning England joining the Schmalkaldic League without assenting to the Augsburg Confession in its entirety.<sup>110</sup> They 'were later influential in the development of the 'Forty-Two Articles' under Edward VI and the 'Thirty-Nine Articles' under Elizabeth I.'<sup>111</sup> The Forty-Two Articles were edited down to thirty-nine by the archbishop of Canterbury Matthew Parker. In 1564 the articles came into effect in order to insist upon a measured, nuanced, and somewhat ambiguous set of doctrines agreeable to

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108. The best recent account of the articles is Oliver O'Donovan *On the Thirty-Nine Articles* (SCM Press: London, 2011). An older, but still useful, history is Charles Hardwick *A History of the Articles of Religion* (F&J Rivington: London, 1851). I have made reference to Carter Lindberg's more recent historical work as it is more compact and easier to access. The text of the articles, however, are cited from the text given in Hardwick *A History of the Articles of Religion* pp. 265-323 by number.

109. Since the Puritan faction would argue for prayer book revision from what it took to be a more Reformed doctrinal position, it is unclear how much the prayer books should be taken as indicative of the faith at the time.

110. Lindberg *The European Reformations* p. 298 They were, therefore, distinct from and yet conciliatory to Lutheran doctrine in their approach. The articles were cast aside after the breakdown of negotiations, and an attack on nonconformity with the six articles.

111. Lindberg *The European Reformations* p.298.

a wide variety of Protestant viewpoints. Historian Carter Lindberg describes this purposeful ambiguity:

'The articles were designed to accommodate the major evangelical theologies by denying transubstantiation on the one hand and Zwinglian symbolism on the other hand, while remaining open to the range of Lutheran and Calvinist interpretations.'<sup>112</sup>

The Lutheran influence on the articles is significant in the articles that follow the wording of the Augsburg Confession, notably those on God, Christ, justification, and the church, but those drafted independently take a more Reformed approach.<sup>113</sup>

Regardless of the doctrinal positions contained in the Articles, they did not come to occupy the place in the Church of England that other Reformed confessions took up in their respective traditions, e.g. the Westminster Confession or the Augsburg Confession, but were one aspect of the emerging Anglican position.<sup>114</sup>

Taking up the matter central to the various disputes in the England of Hooker's day, Article XI gives the teaching on justification, 'We are accompted righteous before God, only for the merite of our Lord and sauour Jesus Christe, by faith, and not for our owne workes or deseruynges.' Being accounted righteous, viz. being justified, necessarily results in good works. The homilies expand this point:

'And as the liuing bodie of a man euer exerciseth such things as belong to a naturall and liuing bodie, for nourishment and preseruacion of the same, as it hath need, opportunity, and occasion: euen so the soule that hath a liuely fayth in it, will bee doing alway some good worke, which shall declare that it is liuing, and will not be vnoccupied.'<sup>115</sup>

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112. Lindberg *The European Reformations* p.313.

113. 'At points where Lutheranism,' Oliver O'Donovan summarises, 'distinguished itself from the other traditions of the Reformation, notably in its doctrine of the Eucharist, the English Articles show no Lutheran leanings.' O'Donovan *On the Thirty-Nine Articles* p.5.

114. One important factor in the confessionalisation of the English Reformation I have omitted here is John Jewel's *Apology for the Church of England*. The semi-official status it obtained influenced both sides of the Puritan and Conformist arguments.

115. *Homily I.IV from Certain Sermons or Homilies 1547-1571*. eds Mary Ellen Rickey and Thomas B. Stroup (Gainesville, FL: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1968).

The good works, though, are not inherently or congruently righteous (XIII), nor are they voluntary works beyond what is required by God (XIV). Instead, actions are righteous because they are performed *in Christ*. The formal characteristics of an action, including even confessing the faith or feeding the hungry, do not determine their righteousness but the intention or motivating force behind them do.<sup>116</sup> The force producing the acts within the Christian believer, for the articles, is Jesus Christ; they are an effect of Christian union with Christ.<sup>117</sup> The union between Christ and the believer is, therefore, moral or ethical only on the basis of Christ's own ethical performance in his self-oblation (XXXI). The re-formed habitual centre produces in course good works as an expression of Christ's animating pressure on the redeemed.

Corrigible church authority is the social outworking of this doctrine of justification. To require the beliefs of a sect or a church order beyond those necessary for being in Christ, the word and sacraments, is to require a righteous work performed apart from Christ since church order is something developed by Christians. The intention, not just the form, of a church determine its viability. Hooker inherited this agenda of Reformation and used it to defend the contemporary practice and principles of the Church of England. The problems of radical Reformation and the philosophical problems of experience created the space for his attempt to defend moderate Reformation and existing lay piety. The Radical demand for a perfect 'Genevan' church order was a demand for good deeds done without reference to ends, intent, or context.

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116. 'For good deedes bee not measured by the facts themselues, and so discerned from vices, but by the ends and intents for the which they were done.' *Homily I.V.*

117. O'Donovan *On the Thirty-Nine Articles* p.77-78..



Besides their teaching on justification the articles asserted two distinctive points for the Reformation in England: the royal prerogative and the concept of adiaphora. The royal right and duty to organise the church in Article XXXVII comes from the monarch's supreme authority within the realm,

'The Queenes Maiestie hath the power in this Realme of England...gouernment of all estates in this Realme, whether they be Ecclesiasticall or Ciuile,' but cannot be equated with ministerial power in the church, 'we geue not to our princes the minstring either of God's word, or of Sacraments, the which thing the Iniunctions also lately set forth by Elizabeth our Queene, doth most plainlie testifie.'

The monarch can order the church inasmuch as it is a part of the civil life of the realm, which by Divine command should be ordered even if the exact nature of the ordering is a matter of human invention. Homily four in the second book describes the dynamic of the various laws ordering the realm:

For the better vnderstanding of this question, it is necessary that wee make a difference betweene the policies of Princes, made for the ordering of their common weales, in prouision of things seruing to the most sure defence of their subiects and countreyes, and betweene Ecclesiasticall policies, in prescribing such workes, by which, as secondary meanes, GODS wrath may be pacified, and his mercy purchased. Positiue lawes made by Princes, for conseruation of their policie, not repugnant vnto GODS Law, ought of all Christian subiects with reuerence of the Magistrate to bee obeyed, not onely for feare of punishment, but also (as the Apostle saith) for conscience sake.

The articles can take this position about society and the church because of the concept of things indifferent, adiaphora, within an ordered society. God desires for there to be order without requiring a certain sort of order, ie. episcopacy or presbyterianism, giving Christians a degree of freedom in these matters. Article XXXIV begins,

'It is not necessarie that traditions and ceremonies be in al places one, or vtterly like, for at all times they haue been diuerse, and may be chaunged accordyng to the diuersitie of Countreys...' and ends, '[every national church] hath auctoritie to ordaine, chaunge, and abolishe ceremonies or rites of the Churche ordeyned onely by mans auctoritie...'

Therefore, confessionalisation of the Reformation did not include a homogenous worshipping community as the basis of international or diachronic unity: other churches, including ancient Israel, have erred in matters of rites and ceremonies as well as 'matters of fayth' (XIX). This is not only the way to interpret the Old Testament civil law.

'Although the lawe geuen from God by Moyses, as touchyng ceremonies and rites, do not bynde Christian men, nor the ciuile preceptes therof, ought of necessitie to be receaued in any common wealth: yet notwithstanding, no Christian man whatsoeuer, is free from the obedience of the commaundmentes, which are called morall.' (Article VII).

All that is necessary, if not possible, is that churches should not ordain anything contrary to God's word, and, further, 'out it not to enforce any thing to be beleued for necessitie of saluation.' (XX) General councils have erred and there pronouncements can only be followed as necessary for salvation when proven out of Scripture. (XXI). The authority of the Bible for church polity is primarily negative rather than positive. Common authority in traditions of the church should, therefore, be relatively binding as a matter of order, and those who offer their own private judgment as a rule 'hurteth the auctoritie of the Magistrate.'(XXXIV)

The teaching of the articles did not only develop from political expedience or Erastian desires. They were an extension of and statement about the central Reformation teaching of justification. 'This 'Elizabethan Settlement' offended the more radical Protestants who desired to purify the church of al Roman Catholic vestiges.'<sup>118</sup> The ensuing controversies Whitgift encountered are evidence of the lack of concord created by the articles. The teaching against the requirement of a certain church order was a somewhat obscure attack on reformers who would require the adherence to a sect as requisite for salvation. 'They are also to be

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<sup>118</sup> Lindberg *The European Reformations* p. 313

accursed,' that presume to require salvation by the sect a person professes or adheres to because 'holy scripture doth set out vnto vs onely the name of Jesus Christe, whereby men must be saved.' (XVIII) Justification through Christ is the only way the articles see a person being saved. The teaching on justification contained in the articles centres on Christology and the role played by Christ in the achievement of human salvation. Bracketing for now the teaching on predestination and election, the teaching on how human participation in Christ's righteousness is the rationale underlying the concept of adiaphora.

If Hooker took on this broad understanding of Reformation, the specific sources of his own understanding of the agenda of Re-Christianisation point to multiple sources. If his early education and time at Corpus Christi College, Oxford are taken as formative, then *at least* two distinct streams of Re-Christianisation need to be taken seriously as the background for his views.

First, as Hooker's tutor, John Rainolds, 'a notable Hellenist', represents a Calvinist version of Re-Christianisation conversant with humanist principles.<sup>119</sup> Rainolds was a member of the moderate Puritan party, serving as one of their representatives at the Hampton Court Conference in 1604 where he persuaded the king of the necessity of a new Bible translation. He was, nevertheless persuaded to accept episcopacy. As the 'radical conscience of the University,' Rainolds pushed for reform on the basis of sound scholarship while avoiding sectarian tactics.<sup>120</sup> Humanistic commitments to toleration, learning, and scholarship were brought together in Rainolds with a commitment to religious reform and conscience action.<sup>121</sup>

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119. *Studies in Richard Hooker* pp. xiii-xiv.

120. *RHCC* pp. 67-68.

121. 'Thus in conspicuous achievements Rainolds worked for the twinning of Erasmian humanism (especially rhetoric) and patristic theology, and he personally exemplified the fruitful

Second, up until his death, John Jewel was Hooker's patron, familiar with his uncle, John Hooker of Exeter, and responsible for sending the younger Hooker to Corpus Christi College. Jewel himself had been at the college as a lecturer in Rhetoric before going abroad to Frankfurt, Strasbourg, and Zürich with Peter Martyr during the Marian exile.<sup>122</sup> Jewel sought to bring the agenda of Continental Reformation to England. Writing to Peter Martyr upon his return, Jewel described a declaration given during a disputation at Westminster with more traditional bishops, '...we have exhibited to the queen all our articles of religion and doctrine, and have not departed in the slightest degree from the confession of Zürich.'<sup>123</sup> Despite his closeness with these Reformers, Jewel happily drew upon other sources to defend and to shape the Reformation in England. The fathers and catholic doctors of the church were, by Jewel at least, thought to be in agreement with the general plan of Reformation.<sup>124</sup> The other serious influence on Jewel was the work of Erasmus. Jewel gives multiple citations of Erasmus from across his work. 'At one point, quoting from the *Enchiridion*, that model of a simple, Christocentric piety, Jewel speaks of Erasmus as 'a man of singular learning and talent.'<sup>125</sup>

From Rainolds and Jewel, Hooker learned both Reformed theology and Christian humanism without a clear conflict between the two: '[T]he contrast between Hooker...on the one hand, and Calvinism, on the other, quickly blurs at

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fusion of the several faculties of learning into a scholar of shining conscience and commitment.' *RHCC*, p. 68.

122. *RHCC* p. 66.

123. *The Zurich Letters* ed. Hastings Robinson (Cambridge: CUP, 1842) p. 21. In another letter to Peter Martyr, '...for as to matters of doctrine, we have pared every thing away to the very quick, and do not differ from your doctrine by a nail's breadth...' p. 100.

124. One example of this is Jewel's challenge in a sermon at Paul's Cross that if any evidence from 'any olde catholique doctor or father,' any general council, or the Scripture could be shown to support private masses then he would convert. John E. Booty *John Jewel as an Apologist of the Church of England* (London: SPCK, 1963) p. 29.

125. Booty *John Jewel* p. 67 J.S. Marshall has argued that the humanistic adherence to the literal sense of Scripture as that intended by the authors works its way down from Erasmus to Hooker. *Hooker and the Anglican Tradition* (London: A & C Black, 1963), ch. 1 especially pp. 2-4.

the edges, especially with respect to the problematics of subjectivity.<sup>126</sup> The problems of subjectivity inherent in talk of justification and assurance were, in fact, the location of Hooker's first battle with the Puritans. It is to Hooker himself and his initial argument over the right strategy of Re-Christianisation in England that I now turn to see why such an extensive reply as the *Lawes* was called for by the extreme Puritan riposte.

### B. Hooker's Dispute at the Temple

Hooker, to the surprise of some, was made Master of the Temple Church in London in March, 1585 in succession to Richard Alvey.<sup>127</sup> Most people had expected Walter Travers, a reader appointed to assist an ailing Alvey, to take up the role of Master of the Temple. Travers, 'l'une des personnalités les plus en vue du mouvement presbytérien',<sup>128</sup> had instituted a form of Presbyterian discipline within the church as well as a simplified liturgy on the Genevan model. Under Alvey and Travers, then, the Temple had become a laboratory—an exemplary vanguard—for Genevan discipline within England capable of recommending itself to the larger established church. When the Archbishop of Canterbury, John Whitgift, blocked Travers in order to appoint Hooker as Master, he was moving against this Presbyterian tendency, as well as continuing his struggle against Puritan elements in the church, especially Thomas Cartwright with whom he had engaged in a protracted polemic.<sup>129</sup>

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126. Shuger *Habits of Thought in the English Renaissance: Religion, Politics, and the Dominant Culture* (University of Toronto Press: Toronto, 1997) p. 84.

127. For the historical details of this account I am following Olivier Loyer *L'Anglicanisme* livre 1, chapitre 1.

128. Loyer *L'Anglicanisme* p. 4.

129. I am not dealing with Cartwright's program in depth because it represents an extension of and radical enlargement of the sort of program advocated by Travers. 'In [Cartwright's] view,

In order to grasp the significance of the controversy for Hooker's own theology two points need to be understood: first, the larger ecclesial context of his views; second, the foundational nature of his difference from Travers. The argument shows Hooker creating a tension for the Reformed system through his positive account of human judgment and stress on the actuality of the sacraments, especially baptism.<sup>130</sup> Just as Luther's theoretical commitment to justification eventually resulted in a practical conflict with the piety of merit, so Hooker's theoretical allegiance to a version of justification and sanctification also brought about his dispute with Travers and Cartwright.

Whitgift had already promulgated a series of three articles in his dioceses aimed at consolidating the Church of England. The first article affirmed the supremacy of the monarch; the second assent to the Biblical nature of the *Book of Common Prayer*; the third required the minister to affirm the *Thirty-nine Articles*.<sup>131</sup> Earlier disputes about vestments and liturgy were beginning to intertwine with more fundamental doctrinal differences in the process of confessionalism. Puritans were beginning to downplay the present efficacy of sacraments while bringing God's unchanging will to prominence, while Conformists were downplaying elaborate theories of election in order to maintain the efficacy of a sacramental system. Although he eventually compromised on the

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the Gospel did not abrogate the moral civil but only the ceremonial laws of Moses; it then gave us in addition further moral and ecclesiastical laws... God has supplied us with a complete rule of life, it must be specific and detailed guide, for 'lawes...are well made to determine all things, and to leave us few things as may be to the discretion of judges.' Frederick Beiser *The Sovereignty of Reason* (Princeton University Press: Princeton, 1996) pp. 54-55.

130. Admittedly Hooker's use of reason is not entirely novel, but the degree of corrigibility in his account of human judgments separates him from his Reformed counterparts. On Hooker's use of reason in relation to the developing Reformed Orthodoxy see Nigel Voak 'Richard Hooker and the Principle of *Sola Scriptura*.' *Journal of Theological Studies* vol. 59 April 2008 pp. 96-139.

131. The sufficiency of the *Articles* was important because its teachings on predestination and perseverance of the saints was being called into question by moderate Calvinist conformists such as Hooker's tutor John Reynolds. Nicholas Tycake *Anti-Calvinists: the Rise of English Arminianism* (Oxford: OUP, 1990) p. 23.

kind of assent given to the articles, Whitgift did not cede defeat in his long-term vision for the church. Whatever machinations went on to bring Hooker to the Temple, he was an acceptable candidate for Whitgift, who was attempting to further establish existing church order against continued institutional reform. From the nomination it can be seen that Hooker was a conformist clergyman willing to defend the polity of the established church against further structural reform. Despite being allied with a powerful state apparatus and an increasingly frustrated monarch, the conformist clergy, especially Hooker, began to espouse a view of the church as an oddly egalitarian place constituted by God's active work *rather than theoretical unity*. Rowan Williams describes this church unity:

'Knowledge of God is not dependent upon theological exactitude of the kind the Puritans work for; thus the mythic and ritual life of the 'ordinary' Christian is defended... [Hooker's] endorsement of rituals of reciprocity and of popular non-conceptual elements in religious practice works against both a simple divine command theory of visible authority in the Church and the privileging of a theological elite.'<sup>132</sup>

Regardless of whether he was thought of as simply a suitable candidate or a champion about to enter the lists, Hooker was chosen to counteract the influence of Travers in the Temple. This fact is further supported by the accusations eventually brought against Hooker. In his supplication against Hooker, Travers describes overlooking small errors in doctrine, but confronting Hooker about his erroneous doctrine of predestination that was allied to that of Anthony Corro, a former Spanish monk and Oxford lecturer who had been attacked by Richard Alvey, the previous Master, for 'affirming free will and speaking not wisely of predestination,'<sup>133</sup> such that perseverance was undercut and the door to Pelagianism

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132. Rowan Williams *Anglican Identities* p. 35.

133. '[Hooker] had taught certain things concerning predestination otherwise than the Word of God doth, as it is understood by all churches professing the gospel, and not unlike that wherewith Corranus sometimes troubled this Church, I both delivered of such points in general

opened. While Hooker cannot be equated with Carro in his views, they were both in the middle of a tension developing around the issues of predestination, the validity of the established liturgy, and the necessity of assent to exhaustively articulated doctrine. The last point was especially troubling to those like Travers and Cartwright who had weathered earlier controversies over vestments on the basis of the English church's doctrinal viability.<sup>134</sup> Arguments about the wearing of a surplice might be tolerated if a Genevan understanding of doctrine could be preached.

Although the liturgy and governance of the Temple church were the presenting causes of the quarrel between Richard Hooker and Walter Travers, the dispute was an extension of previous skirmishes between emerging Puritans and Conforming clergy that would eventually erupt into the full-fledged Anti-Calvinism of the Laudian 'Arminians.'<sup>135</sup> The stakes included how doctrinal discernment occurs as well as the nature or shape of sanctification. The means and goals of Re-Christianising England were being worked out in the back and forth between these groups.<sup>136</sup> The different disputes over predestination, vestments,

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doctrine.' Travers' Supplication in 1850 edition of Hooker's Works p. 662. See also Tyacke *Anti-Calvinists* pp. 58-59.

134. '[I]t was basic premise of the presbyterian position that what was at stake in the puritan campaign was but the completion of the English reformation, a process, which, while it had been carried to fruition in the realm of doctrine, was still sadly lagging behind in the realm of discipline.' Peter Lake *Moderate Puritans and the Elizabethan Church*. (Cambridge: CUP, 1982) p. 65. 'The close connection between presbyterianism, anti-papal polemic and a rigid attitude to predestination and related issues - a connection which has already been noted in thought of William Whitaker, Thomas Cartwright, Laurence Chaderton, William Fulke and Walter Travers - had, as a result of a common attitude to scriptural authority and theological argument, a strong underlying theoretical basis.' pp. 219-220.

135. '...the rise of English Arminianism, and the consequent outlawing of Calvinism during the 1620s, both destabilized the religious status quo and provided a cutting edge to the increasingly acrimonious politics of Charles I's reign. Puritans, who had been at least partially reconciled to the established church, were as a result driven into renewed opposition.' Nycholas Tyacke *Anti-Calvinists* p. viii.

136. As will eventually become clear, the underlying reasons for the dispute were differences in the sort of creaturely understanding and existence appropriate to those who had been redeemed by Jesus Christ. Christological commitments, which are in turn tied to soteriological conceptions, will be seen in Hooker's defence of lay piety.



ritual, and church government were part of a larger conflict in European thought over the validity of human judgment and the relation of humanity to God.<sup>137</sup>

Underneath the local tension, therefore, were different views about the nature of revelation, redemption, and community. For Travers these issues were of fundamental importance if the church were to be reformed and not fall into the error of 'Quene Maries daies' i.e. Roman Catholicism.<sup>138</sup> In his *A Learned and Comfortable Sermon of the Certaintie and Perpetuitie of Faith in the Elect*<sup>139</sup> and *A Learned Discourse of Justification, Workes, and How the Foundation of Works is Overthrowne*<sup>140</sup>, the sermons Travers stridently objected to, Hooker begins an account of the way in which church reform takes place that he will expand at length in the *Lawes*, but which is more or less fully formed at this point. The presenting doctrinal issues were the assurance of salvation and sanctification in the Christian life.

### C. The Sermons on Certainty and Justification

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137. '[Hooker] tackled the Presbyterian system as a symptom of deeper, underlying issues to do with sources of authority, the nature of the Church and biblical hermeneutics.' Paul Avis *In Search of Authority: Anglican Theological Method from the Reformation to the Enlightenment* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014) p. 105. Frederick Beiser declares Hooker's *Lawes* the 'birth of the English Enlightenment' brought on by the birth pangs of Puritanism. *The Sovereignty of Reason* p. 48.

138. Walter Travers 'A Supplication to the Privy Counsel' in *Works* V.208.9

139. This is sermon Travers describes as being upon 'this doctrine of his, that the assurance of that we believe by the word is not so certain as of that we perceive by sense' on Habakkuk 1:4, 'Therefore the law is slacked, and judgment doth never go forth.'

140. This is the sermon wherein Hooker affirms the relative validity of the Roman Church. The text is the second half of Habakkuk 1:4, 'The wicked doth compass about the righteous: therefore the perverse judgment doth proceed.' The most in depth guide to these sermons is Corneliu C. Simut *The Doctrine of Salvation in the Sermons of Richard Hooker* (Walter De Gruyter: Berlin, 2005). He ends his study: 'To conclude, Hooker's doctrine of salvation is unmistakably Protestant and specifically Reformed. He continues the early tradition of the first English Reformers which is evident in his treatment of some of the most important features of Lutheran and Reformed Protestantism, such as faith, justification, sanctification, glorification, election, reprobation, and the sovereignty of God.' p. 308. Much of the argument that follows mirrors his much more detailed analysis.

The offending account of certainty in the first sermon describes the believer's experiential *struggle*. Human knowledge of God and his purposes remains obscure and cannot simply be equated or detached from the present experience of the believer. The experience of pain, poverty, and the success of others attacks the palpable sense of being saved in Christ, and Hooker has no illusions about the agony of trusting in the promises of Christ in the face of material problems.<sup>141</sup> God remains hidden and different in his action in the world; his effects are not like a fire inflaming.

'[B]ut the incomprehensible wisdom of god doth limit the effectes of his powre to such a measure as seemeth best unto him selfe. Wherefore he worketh that certainty in all which sufficeth abundantly to their salvation in the life to come, but in none so great as attaineth in this lyfe unto perfection.' (*Certaintie* 1 V.72.27-31)

For Hooker, the commitments of faith should not override the concrete experiences of the believer's everyday life. He is objecting to something like the cleavage of thought and life diagnosed by James. Hence, his dismay at those who think they are more sure of the assurance of their salvation than they are the rising of the sun. Such assurance is premised upon a kind of perfection that has no need of Christ's work.<sup>142</sup> Even Abraham, often used as an example of certainty, still feared and even doubted *within* his faith in God. The lack of perfection, the Christian's inability to totally cleave to God as he or she should, is the reason why the righteousness of Christ is needed. 'No, god wyll have them that shall walke in light to feel now and then what is to sit in *shadow of death*.' (*Certaintie* 1 V.75.16-18) The obscurity of God's action requires interpretive activity on the part of the Christian who does so

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141. *A Learned and Comfortable Sermon of the Certaintie and Perpetuitie of Faith in the Elect* 5 V.80.20-81.10.

142. 'Nowe concerning the rightuous, there neither is, nor never was any mere naturall man absolutly rightuous in himself, that is to saye void of all unrightuousnes, of all synne: we dare not excepte no not the blessed virgen her self...' *Justification* 2 V.105.23-106.2

without having an explicit concept of how everything fits together, but is aware of the relationship within which his or her life is taking place.

Faith requires labour in order to discover the meaning of experiences of grief, bereavement, and abandonment. They must be placed within a larger frame of God's obscure action upon the Christian. The experiential outworking of faith in piety should not, for Hooker, exempt faith from contact with concrete pains of everyday life. By not removing the experience from its plain meaning, despair, depression, or melancholy for instance, the Christian gives the proper meaning to the experience within the secret operations of God. '[T]her is no doubt but that our faith may have and hath his privy operations, secrett to us in whom, yet knowen unto him by whome they are.' (*Certaintie* 1 V.75.28-30) Being *weak* in faith is still being weak *in faith*.

In these sermons, revelation is not the communication of timeless verities, but rather a call to action in light of who Christ is:

'[Christ's] praier must not exclude oure labor. There thoughtes ar vaine who thinke there wachinge can preserv the citie which god him selfe is not willinge to keepe... The husbandman may not therefor burne his plow nor the marchant forsake his trade, because God haith promised *I wyll not faile the*.' (*Certaintie* 5 V.81.11-17)

God's action does not do away with human action and God's promises do not exempt believers from sensible decision making. Thought takes work in order to discover the truth of a matter. The comparison between perseverance and material stability make it clear that Hooker is not thinking of those promises within a restricted religious sphere but is engaged pastorally in all of human life. Unlike those Puritans trying to sequester religious knowledge, Hooker contentedly speaks of theological learning along the lines of other forms of knowledge requiring work, judgment, and error. Despite its lofty subject matter religious knowledge remains

human knowledge. Human stability in the faith is not, though, a matter of human security since it can coexist with tribulation, anguish, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, and the sword, and these things can be endured and worked through 'through the gracious mediation of [Christ's] praier...' <sup>143</sup> (*Certaintie* 5 V.82.18)

The struggle of the Christian life, the sheer labour involved in belief, has a reality in Hooker's thought Travers will object to, especially when he extends this line of reasoning to think about churches rather than individual lives. The presenting problem in the justification sermons is whether previous generations of English people who were members of the Catholic church ignorantly 'living in popish superstitions' could be saved. Hooker holds open the possibility of salvation for Roman Catholics while fully acknowledging that their teaching is for him mixed with heresies and innovations. The argument in the sermon has two parts. First, Hooker clarifies the nature of the disagreement with the 'Church of Rome;' second, he shows how some could be within the Church of Rome without denying the foundation of faith.

The primary point of disagreement between the English and Roman churches is the nature and application of justifying righteousness. Hooker introduces the problem with a succinct summary of his own views:

'There is a glorifyinge righteousness of men in the Worlde to comme, and there is a justefying and a sanctefyinge righteousness here. *The righteousness wherewith we shalbe clothed* in the world to come, is both perfecte but not inherente, that whereby we are sanctified, inherent but not perfecte. This openeth a way to the plaine understanding of that ground question, which hangeth yet in controversie betwene us and the church of *Rome*, aboute the matter of justefying righteousness.' (*Justification* 3 V.109.6-14)

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143. See also '...by longe experience we have found ytt trew, as many as have entered there names in the mysticall *booke of Lyfe*, *eos maximum laborem suscipere*, they have taken upon them a labersome, a toylefull, a painefull proffession, *sed omnium maxime tutos esse*, but no mens securitie lyke to theyres.' *Certaintie* 5 V.81.1-5.

The Roman teaching pivots on the view that justification is a communication of a perfect righteousness to a person such that they possess it as an *inherent* quality.<sup>144</sup>

The problem with this view, for Hooker, is that it undoes the right relationship between God and creature by making that relationship, in some sense, dependent upon the competent work of the creature. The relationship is manipulatable rather than appropriately asymmetrical; by making use of the medieval penitential system alongside good works, the sinner can change God's view of them.

The repeated attack on the grace of justification as the communication of an inherent righteousness, which Hooker fully grants as a description of the righteousness of sanctification, could be evidence of a preference for a stress on alien righteousness, but is better taken as an insistence on Christ's mediating function. The asymmetrical relationship between Creator and creature *is intensified* in the relationship between Christ and the believer so that believers are more dependent on Christ for their justification than they are on God for their souls. The justifying action has a definite direction and historical referent that cannot be reversed or done away with. Christ has incorporated Christian believers into his person by taking their sin into his person perfectly fulfilling the law. '[W]e care for no knowledge in the worlde but this, that man hath synned and god *hath suffred*, that god hath made hym self the synne of men, and that men are made *the rightuousnes of god*. (*Justification* 6 V.113.9-12) God's suffering, a point I will return to in depth later, of man's sin is the basis for the justification of men, not the communication of an inherent quality. Teaching to the contrary perverts 'the truth

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144. Roman divines teach a good deal that is in accord with right doctrine: God alone justifies; Christ as God is efficient and as man the meritorious cause of human justification; Christ's merits must be applied; 'yett in us also there is something requyred.' (*Justification* 4 V.109.26) Despite these differences, they disagree about the way in which the application of Christ's merits take place and the means for this application.

of Christe.' (*Justification* 6 V.113.13-14)<sup>145</sup> Again and again, in his insistence on the primacy of the New Testament narrative, the emphasis on God's historical action in Christ, the recitation of Christ's personal history in the evangelists, Hooker returns to the primacy of Christian dependence on God's historical action in Christ as unique in Christian salvation. Justification cannot be detached from its historic reference. As imputed righteousness, Christ's righteousness never completely fits with the developing inherent righteousness of the Christian believer including the believer's way of making sense of the world. Although the larger theories or speculations are not done away with, Hooker will develop them at length in the *Lawes*, they do not broker or constitute what happens in the Christian believer.

Justification, Christian union with God-in-Christ, and knowledge of God, which are the same thing, do not allow for a human scheme of knowledge to determine them; they determine any such scheme. The specific, historical confession of Christ as Lord is the distinctive Christian confession that must be acknowledged in express terms, and this is in contrast to those who stress the necessity of acknowledging God's providence, power, judgment, etc.. If those are the requirements, Hooker reasons, Gentiles and ploughman are Christians without knowing the name of Christ.<sup>146</sup>

The implication of this last point is that to require an elaborate speculative theory, which will be an *elite* theory, instead of the confession of Christ as Lord is to make pagans better Christians than many faithful lay believers. The doctrinal

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145. The attack on the Roman church may also be a disguised attack on the Puritan movement itself. Travers will object to Hooker's claim that Christians are more certain of their physical senses than salvation. The perfect knowledge of salvation inasmuch as human beings know it, would be inherent for Hooker. The Puritan and Roman systems overlap in this regard.

146. *Justification* 24 V.135.12. As will become clear further on, Hooker is not actually denying the accuracy of the descriptions only their role in salvation.

edifice employed by those like Travers and Cartwright to support the larger project of practical reform in the church is relativised by Hooker's insistence that such schemes of belief are not necessary *because they are speculative*. What is necessary for Hooker is the explicit confession of Jesus Christ maintained throughout the history of the church. Not only can the corrupt Roman church, the most compromised body for the Puritans, still manage to lead people to salvation in Christ, it can do so without maintaining the doctrinal distinctions insisted on by the Puritans.

Nevertheless, Hooker *does* maintain, despite the overlap between the churches already noted, that the Roman church denies the foundation of the faith, but only by consequent.<sup>147</sup> Denial by consequent does not directly overthrow the foundation of the church; it indirectly denies it by holding 'any one assertion whatsoever, whereupon the directe deniall thereof maie be necessarily concluded.' (*Justification* 25 V.135.20) When this is not a purposeful denial of Christ or when the person denying by consequent has not been called to repentance, such a denial does not give grounds for supposing that person to be damned. Other examples of those who deny by consequent are Lutherans,<sup>148</sup> 'those fathers in the greek church...in the error of freewill', and those Galatians who required circumcision. (*Justification* 26 V.143.18-19) The final example is given to show how someone could require a certain kind of work once mandated by God, circumcision, beyond confession of Christ without therefore denying the foundation of faith. Paul's way of dealing with the Galatians was to declare them gravely mistaken rather than apostate: 'Yet he which condempneth their error confesseth notwithstandinge that they knew god and were knowne of him, he taketh not the honour from them

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147. *Justification* 17 V.125.1.

148. *Justification* 17.

to be termed sonnes begotten by the ymortall seed of the gospell.' (*Justification* 26 V.144.22-145.1) By linking the Catholic and the Puritan error to the Galatians' error, Hooker is arguing for a similar approach in handling the Roman church. Laypeople in the Catholic church ignorant of the intricate doctrinal system within the church, who knew of Jesus and trusted in him for salvation, whatever additional errors they committed, must be reckoned as possibly saved if justification by faith is to be maintained. Once Hooker historicises this point, and justification itself, the oddly 'egalitarian' move against the elite creation of doctrine, Roman and Puritan, comes about through placing the development of doctrine within the realm of sanctification.

In reference to the discussion of the nature of justification above, the confession of the foundation maps onto justification, perfect and not inherent, while further development of Christian belief belongs to sanctification, inherent but imperfect, including the works of the mind. To require a perfect conception of doctrine beyond the confession of Christ as the author of salvation, is to require a work to bring about righteousness in the person just as the Galatians did with circumcision. *One can, therefore, read from Hooker's sermon not a defence of Catholicism but a critique of the Puritan insistence of requiring the 'work' of the Calvinist theological system.* When Puritans, such as Travers, make the doctrinal system necessary for regular Christians they intellectually repeat the error of the circumcising Galatians. As will become clear in a closer reading of Hooker's theology, he is arguing against the idea of taking developed doctrinal systems as the actual faith of Christian believers outside of the universities and church hierarchies.



In the next section, I will turn to Hooker's major work along the lines of the trajectory given in these sermons. The fundamental nature of the disagreement between Hooker and his Puritan opponents, or the depth of their error perhaps, demanded the systematic reply essayed by Hooker. Hooker's teaching on justification and sanctification, given above, led him to formulate this fundamental reply *pragmatically* in the broad terms I developed in my introduction. Rowan Williams attributes a pragmatism to Hooker that

'embraces a fair degree of clarity about the final goal of human beings and the theological conditions for getting there, but allows room for a good deal of reticence and scepticism as to claims that we have found comprehensive formulation.'<sup>149</sup>

The accumulated wisdom and knowledge of received over-beliefs possess a real authority in this situation but only as they enlighten and clarify human experience.

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149. Williams *Anglican Identities* p. 26.

### **Chapter 3. Hooker on Laws**

In the larger plan of the thesis this chapter sets out Hooker's account of the initial position of human agents in the formative dynamic of piety apart from the Christian religion. They relate to God in an insufficient way while, at the same time, receiving the drive or habitual centre basic to them as agents.

This chapter will concern itself with Hooker's conception of humanity's place in the world in relation to God as creator, a conception setting the parameters of Christ's work and consequent church life. My plan going forward will attend to this foundation or root of his subsequent theology in three movements. First, I will briefly define what Hooker means by 'law' as a generic concept capable of being used in multiple contexts, i.e. analogously. Second, following Hooker's own order of explanation, the interactions between the various laws will be laid out beginning with the eternal laws before progressing to the laws of creation. Third, I will treat the unique aspects of the law at work in humanity as it engages its world as a rational, voluntary, and learning agent. Human beings engage with the laws by learning to receive them through a complex interaction of their senses, cultured reason, and appropriate moral commitment. The process of learning, however, fails to reveal the law of God's being until Christ performs his work. Natural human being in Hooker's scheme ineluctably need a supernatural grace: creation points to incarnation.

While speaking of the supernatural, Hooker maintains the close interconnection between nature, including human nature and grace: "nature hath

need of grace, [1 Cor. ii.14] whereunto I hope, we are not opposite, by holding that grace hath use of nature.' (*Lawes* III.8.6 I.223.28-29) The basic features of human nature and created reality persist throughout the entire drama of redemption such that the means of that redemption cannot be in complete contradiction to those basic features of natural life. Thus, human experience of God as creator is fundamental to his entire account and to any thinking human life: 'The wise and learned among the verie Heathens themselves, have all acknowledged some first cause whereupon originallie the being of all things dependeth.' (*Lawes* I.2.3 I.59.33-60.2)

As a prelude to his defence of the Church of England's liturgical, theological, and political life, he expounds this relationship of dependence through the concept of law for the first four books of the *Lawes* in order to establish a basis for his disagreement with the Puritans, who have neglected to attend to these difficult but basic matters.<sup>150</sup>

## *I. Laws, Eternal and Created*

### *A. 'Law' Defined*

Hooker establishes early in his work that, while the particular laws ordering the worship, life, and piety of the church are the presenting object of dispute

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150. 'And if any complaine of obscuritie, they must consider, that in these matters it commeth no otherwise to passe then in sundry the workes both of art and also of nature, where that which hath greatest force in the very thing we see is notwithstanding it selfe oftentimes not seene. The statelinsse of houses, the goodliness of trees when we behold them delighteth the eye; but that foundation which beareth up the one, that root which ministereth unto the other nourishment and life, is in the bosome of the earth concealed... In like maner, the use and benefite of good lawes all that live under them may enjoy with delight and comfort, albeit the groundes and first originall causes from whence they have sprong be unknowne, as to the greatest part of men they are.' (*Lawes* I.1.2 I.57.2-16)

between the various parties in the Church of England, the actual root of the antagonism is a basic disagreement about the very concept of law, the ordering of life and action. As a result of this disagreement, he assumes the Puritan error manifests a 'central epistemological lapse' about the proper relationship between reason, scripture, and church polity.<sup>151</sup> He, therefore, begins his defence with a definition of law itself: 'A law therefore generally taken, is a directive rule unto goodnes of operation.' (*Lawes* I.VIII.4 I.84.16-17) Goodness of operation here means that all things possess a way of being in the world that is not capricious, accidental, or violently imposed upon them enabling movement from possibility to act. These various aspects of creation are formed to their appropriate given end according to 'some canon, rule, or lawe' so that 'that which doth assigne unto each thing the kinde, that which doth moderate the force and power, that which doth appoint the forme and measure, of working, the same we tearme a *Lawe*.' (*Lawes* I.2.1 I.58.26-29) They 'have their beginning and being by a voluntarie purpose, wherewith God hath eternally decreed when and howe they should be.' (*Lawes* I.2.2 I.59.10-11)

A law is the necessary formative regimen for some specific act to be obtained in a given situation as a means whereby some desired or decreed end is accomplished. God, for instance, is not just a first cause but an agent 'which knowing *what* and *why* it worketh, observeth in working a most exact *order* or *lawe*.' (*Lawes* I.II.3 I.60.3-4) Laws allow actions, the transition from or reduction possibility to act, to carry out some specific intention. The suitability of a law has to do with its ability to accomplish the desired end in a given situation. Good laws are supremely fitting or appropriate to their end and their context.<sup>152</sup>

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151. Peter Lake *Anglicans and Puritans* p. 147.

152. J.S. Marshall *Hooker and the Anglican Tradition* ch. 9.

While he will go on to differentiate between divine and created law, Hooker unites the two laws in their basic generic features: voluntary, chosen for some given purpose, *and* non-arbitrary, appropriate to a context and fitting to the nature of the actor.<sup>153</sup> As voluntary and non-arbitrary, a law fulfils some desire in one who lives according to it while at the same time, with one very important exception, being given by another. So everything is involved in certain relations of dependence in the world as receivers of a law, with the exception of God, upon whom everything depends in some manner.<sup>154</sup> Defined in this way, law requires that all created things relate in some way to other created things to be and to become; all things possess an appetite to move from potentiality to act—their desire of goodness—only capable of being fulfilled according to some directive related to other beings desirous of their fulfilment. The divinely appointed and entirely given end works itself out through the interdependent web of creation. A basic relation of interaction and interdependence exists among all created beings who accomplish their end through their negotiation of that relationship with others. It is the particularities of the communication and reception of this law in Hooker's scheme that allow this directing movement to be a fulfilment rather than an imposition.

Hooker classifies laws into two major categories: eternal and created. Each of these categories are divided further as Hooker elaborates the interlocking laws at work in human life.<sup>155</sup> Two eternal laws bring about the created laws, of natural

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153. 'They erre therefore who thinke that of the will of God to do this or that there is no reason besides his will.' (*Lawes* II.2.5 I.61.18-19)

154. '[All things work] according to a lawe, whereof some superiours, unto whome they are subject, is author; only the workes and operations of God have him both for their worker, and for the lawe whereby they are wrought.' (*Lawes* I.2.2 I.59.2-4)

155. The best overview of these various laws, which I have made use of in the following discussion, is still Francis Paget's *Introduction to the Fifth Book of Hooker's Treatise of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1899). See especially Paget's chart on page 100. More recent often genealogical accounts of the laws with special attention to 'natural law' are W.J. Torrance Kirby 'The Neo-Platonic Logic of Richard Hooker's Generic Division of Law' *Renaissance et Réforme/Renaissance and Reform* vol. 22 no. 4 (1998) 49-67 and Paul

agents, of angels, of men, which spread out into the various laws ordering human society as men and women find themselves in the middle of worldly forces, and the supernatural law. As will be seen below, the created laws depend on the eternal laws in an entirely asymmetrical fashion wherein God, as an agent, sets down the order of working for his creatures in their various conditions and contexts. I turn now to these two eternal laws.

### *B. The Law of God*

#### *i. The First Eternal Law*

The first eternal law is the law of God's being: '[t]he being of God is a kinde of lawe to his working; for that perfection which God is, geveith perfection to that he doth.' (*Lawes* I.II.2) The being of God operates according to a law 'natural, necessary, and internal' consisting of the generation of the Son, and the proceeding of the Spirit. Before treating Christology in book V of the *Lawes*, Hooker avoids handling this law of God's operation at length. He focusses, instead, on those operations that 'have their beginning and being by a voluntarie purpose, wherewith God hath eternally decreed when and howe they should be.' (*Lawes* I.2.2 I.59.10-11) The first eternal law is voluntary in a certain way, but not in another: the Trinitarian relations making up God's internal, necessary, and natural being, are voluntary in not being imposed or received, but are *not* an expression of God's voluntary purpose for the world in the same way that the second eternal law will be.

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Surlis 'Natural Law in Richard Hooker (c. 1554-1600)' *The Irish Theological Quarterly* vol. XXXV no. 2 (April 1968) 173-85.

The first eternal law does become an object of a dark human knowledge through the second law but that dark knowledge will only become clear on the far side of the incarnation.<sup>156</sup> The law of God's being *differs* from the laws of other beings in that the worker, God, does not receive the law from some superior. Accustomed to speaking about *received* laws, human words need to be 'wary and few' because God exists as a wholly self-contained unity, 'very *Oneness*', unlike other beings who are necessarily composite.<sup>157</sup> While Hooker will use law to describe the operations and actions of God and humanity, the simplicity and un-received character of the law of God's being sets up a fundamental difference and constitutive asymmetry between God and creation.

Nevertheless, even non-Christian people, and especially pagan philosophers, are aware of God as first cause *and* as an agent through an observance and speculation about the world around them.<sup>158</sup> Such an awareness is possible because knowledge of God as first cause follows from the human experience of dependent relations.<sup>159</sup> The disposition of natural forces in the world receives order from a superior cause, God. All law, all *observed* order in the world, inherently entails some form of dependence, some receptivity in its possessor in relation to some desired task and author. So God, as one who works according to his eternal

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156. 'Dangerous it were for the feeble braine of man to wade farre into the doings of the most High; whome although to knowe be life, and joy to make mention of his name; yet our soundest knowledge is to know that we know him not as indeed he is, neither can we know him: and our safest eloquence concerning him is our silence, when we confesse without confession that his glory is inexplicable, his greatnes above our capacitie and reach. He is above, and we upon earth; therefore it behoveth our wordes to be warie and fewe.' (*Lawes* I.2.2 I.59.12-20)

157. Despite being 'one, or rather verie *Onenesse*, and meere unitie having nothing but it selfe in it selfe, and not consisting (as all things do besides God) of many things. In which essentiall unitie of God a Trinitie personall neverthelesse subsisteth, after a manner far exceeding the possibilitie of mans conceipt.' (*Lawes* I.2.2. I.59.20-24)

158. 'The wise and learned among the verie Heathens themselves have all acknowledged some first cause whereupon originallie the being of all things dependeth. Neither have they otherwise spoken of that cause than as an Agent, which knowing *what* and *why* it worketh, observeth in working a most exact *order* or *lawe*.' (*Lawes* I.2.3 I.59.33-60.4)

159. '... on God as the most high all inferior causes in the world are dependent.' (*Lawes* V.XXIII.1. II.110.17-18)

law, is not only a first cause, but he is an agent who uses 'Counsel,' follows 'Reason,' observes a 'way,' keeps 'order;' God is an '*intellectual* worker.' (*Lawes* I.2.3 I.60.8-9) Still, the 'manner of this divine efficiencie' eludes the grasp of the human intellect that can only acknowledge that 'the naturall generation and processe of all things receyveth order of proceeding from the settled stability of divine understanding.' (*Lawes* I.3.4 I.68.6-8) The reason for specific occurrences may remain a secret for human beings who possess only a dark apprehension of God's eternal law, but all events go forward according to some reasonable counsel. The will of God does not operate 'with no reason besides his will' but with the reason appropriate to a certain end. The law of God, while voluntarily imposed by God on himself, is not for that reason arbitrary or capricious. He works according to a set purpose appropriate to the end he desires to accomplish.

God's law, therefore, is non-arbitrary and voluntary as other laws despite being self-imposed and immutable.<sup>160</sup> The purpose of this external working is 'the exercise of his most glorious and most abundant vertue.' (*Lawes* I.II.4 I.61.6-7) God creates, observes a directive law, for the purpose of expressing his virtue in the riches of variety and abundance in the second eternal law.

## *ii. The Second Eternal Law*

The second eternal law is the law 'which with himself [God] hath set downe as expedient to be kept by all his creatures, according to the severall condition wherwith he hath endued them.' (*Lawes* I.3.1 I.63.8-10) While the first law

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160. 'Nor is the freedom of the wil of God any whit abated, let or hindered, by meanes of this; because the imposition of this law upon himself is his own free and voluntary act.' (*Lawes* I.2.6 I.62.29-63.1)



concerns God's own working, the second law, while purposed by God and, therefore, eternal in some sense, concerns the operations of creatures. Depending on who is subject to it, this eternal ordering can be described under a number of names: nature's law, the law celestial, the law of reason, divine law, and human law. Angels, plants, stars, humans, and human society require different rules or canons for them to accomplish their various intended ends, and so the single law ordering creation takes different though coherent form as it leads them to their appointed end. This is the law imposed by a superior, God, upon a subject, creation, so that creation can attain its intended end. 'All things therefore, which are as they ought to be, are conformed unto *this second law eternall...*' (*Lawes* I.3.1 I.63.26-27) The various creatures within creation are conformed to this law in different ways appropriate to their place in creation. Leaving to the side celestial law of angels, Hooker's primary distinction is between natural agents, which keep the law 'unwittingly,' and voluntary agents, which keep a law through their use of reason. (*Lawes* I.3.2 I.64.5-10)

Natural agents follow the second eternal law 'unwittingly' in their regular processes and generation, and yet, these processes and generations—seasons, plant life, animal reproduction, weather—do operate according to an intelligently ordered law. Nature has no independent intelligence set upon 'certain exemplary draughts or patternes... subsisting in the bosome of the Highest,' but the appearance of a directing intelligence in the regularity of the natural world follows from 'the guide of nature...the only God of nature...*In Him wee live, move, and are.*'(*Lawes* I.3.4 I.66.33-67.1,67.15-17 ) The natural world follows the second eternal law under the direction of the divine efficiency or causality tied up with the first eternal law. The divine causality, though, 'being farre above us, we are no more able to

conceive by our reason than creatures unreasonable by their sense are able to apprehend after what manner we dispose and order the course of our affaires.' (*Lawes* I.3.4 I.68.3-6) Nature manifests the work of an intelligence or understanding without becoming straightforwardly clear.<sup>161</sup> When considered as the result of this divine intelligence, God's use of the natural world as a means for the accomplishment of his external working is termed Providence.<sup>162</sup>

Providential use of this creation, however, does not usually come about through an overriding intervention of the processes occurring in creation, rather created beings receive their character, through inferior or secondary causes. Hooker envisions this relationship between divine efficiency and natural causality as a dynamic relationship where God makes use of both regular and contingent secondary causes: providence 'works *with* not *against* free will'.<sup>163</sup> Basic to this dynamic relationship is Hooker's understanding of created beings as existing 'somewhat in possibilitie' on their way to being 'in act.' (*Lawes* I.5.1 I.72.29-30) The tension between possibility and act results in an 'appetite or desire' in all things for a greater degree of actuality and goodness. To fulfil this desire, to move from potentiality to act, all things ought to adopt a way of operating appropriate to their desired end and this way of operating should be the second eternal law, which Hooker glosses as 'the participation of God himselfe.' (*Lawes* I.5.2 I.73.10) Natural or unwitting agents keep this eternal law, act in accordance with it, in reaction to their given contexts without the intervention of reason. It is the means of

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161. 'Only thus much is discerned [ of the divine effeciency from the work of God in nature], that the naturall generation and processe of all things receyveth order of proceeding from the settled stabilitie of divine understanding.' (*Lawes* I.3.4 I.68.6-8)

162. Hooker gives this citation from Thomas Aquinas: 'Vide Thom. in Compend. Theol. cap. 3: 'Omne quod movetur ab aliquo est quasi instrumentum quoddam primi moventis. Ridiculum est autem, etiam apud indoctos, ponere, instrumentum moveri non ab aliquo principali agente.' (*Lawes* I.3.4 I.68.18)

163. Miller *Richard Hooker* p. 50.

communicating this law to the various natural agents that Hooker finds elusive in the working of providence rather than the observance of it. For reasoning agents, i.e. humans, this way of operating is impossible apart from Christ making real their participation in God by revealing God as a certain agent with a certain goal.

If the communication of law and the exact relationship between divine efficiency and inferior causes is opaque for Hooker, he still draws certain distinctions between the various ways God deals with creation in these relationships. God's intelligent direction of nature takes on different forms in order to maintain the coherence of God's character as an actor depending on the subject or patient of those causes and that patient's context in the relationship between creator and creature. So deviations from the second eternal law

'are notwithstanding in some sort ordered by *the first eternall lawe*. For what good or evill is there under the sunne, what action correspondent or repugnant unto the law which God hath imposed upon his creatures, but in or upon it God doth worke according to the law which himselfe hath eternally purposed to keep; that is to say, the *first law eternall*? ' (*Lawes* I.3.1 I.63.28-64.1)

The integrity of the first eternal law, its immutability as a canon for action, allows God to engage dynamically with creation without compromising God's character in a negotiated or symmetrical relationship. Hooker describes the moments of this asymmetrical relationship as 'creation' and 'governance.' (*Dublin Fragments* 27 IV.134.13) Creation names God's determination to attain his desired end, 'that natural desire which his goodness hath to shew and impart itself', and governance designates his guidance of creation to that end, including 'mercie and wrath... mercie of his owne accord, and wrath by occasion offered.' (*DF* 27 IV.134.20-21) God adheres to his own eternal law precisely by responding in various ways to each situation as it arises in the second. Wrath, for instance, is the *appropriate* divine

response to certain situations given the character of God inherent in the canon of the first eternal law.

The natural world, then, possesses a density independent of human reason or understanding that, nevertheless, human life depends on in order to survive.<sup>164</sup> The presence of the second eternal law in the natural processes of creation is important for Hooker's larger theological project because it will provide the appropriate means for God to communicate his law to voluntary human agents in dynamic engagement. As with natural agents, God will govern voluntary or reasonable agents according to his original purpose in creation, but he will accomplish his original desire in a way appropriate to the particular characteristics of those agents, especially their free and reasonable will. The communication of God's will to human agents does not occur through a direct or bare divine command but through the practical reason appropriate to a voluntary agent. In this way the fixed and eternal nature of God's being gives shape to the relative and temporal life of voluntary human agents. I turn now to the nature of God's communication of his law to human beings, rational agents.

### *C. The Law of Human Agents*

Voluntary human agents differ from other terrestrial agents by acquiring their law wittingly.<sup>165</sup> The basic structure for the human reception, propagation, and activation of human laws recapitulates the scheme of the two eternal laws:

'[a human agent] made according to the likenes of his maker resembleth him also in the maner of working: so that whatsoever we worke as men, the same

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164. 'But in as much as righteous life presupposeth life; inasmuch as to live virtuously it is impossible except we live, therefore the first impediment, which naturally we endeavor to remove, is penurie and want of things without which we cannot live.' (*Lawes* I.10.2 I.97.17-20)

165. I am simply putting to the side the question of how angels receive the law appropriate to their task.

we doe wittingly worke and freely... The good which either is gotten by doing, or which consisteth in the very doing it selfe, causeth not action, unlesse apprehending it as good we so like and desire it... Goodnesse is seen with the eye of the understanding. And the light of that eye, is reason. So that two principall fountaines there are of humaine action, *Knowledge* and *Will...*' (*Lawes* I.7.2 I.77.20-78.5)

Like God, human agents work intelligently, freely, and asymmetrically in relation to their contexts. Human agents work out their purposes as intellectual agents who produce a law for their work according to a kind of practical reason. A human agent chooses to act in a certain way through a diverse though holistic operation responding to various pressures, desires, and goals at work in his or her concrete context.<sup>166</sup> The resultant positive laws expressing this practical reasoning parallels the second eternal law in the natural world.

While, unlike God, human agents *receive* the law of their working from a superior, human action goes into motion through an exercise of the will as a free choice uncompelled by another. The choice will not be arbitrary, unformed, or blank, but will respond to a situation. Thus voluntary agents can choose to leave things undone: '[t]here is in the will of man naturally that freedome, whereby it is apt to take or refuse any particular object whatsoever being presented unto it.' (*Lawes* I.VII.6 I.79.27-30)<sup>167</sup>

Human agents, whatever their situation, are necessarily morally responsible for their choices even if those choices are limited or given by some authority inasmuch as they act wittingly. So when the will does turn itself to some particular end it makes a choice, but, Hooker maintains, the *freedom* of the will requires that the will be separated by reason from the appetite, an 'inferior naturall desire.'

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166. William Bouwsma describes this practical reason as 'a kind of generalised common sense, the product of a holistic personality as it functions in acts of judgment.' William Bouwsma 'Hooker in the Context of European Cultural History.' *RHCCC* p. 52.

167. Voak, rightly, sees this parallel between divine and human freedom as evidence of Hooker's positive use of Scotus. *Richard Hooker and Reformed Theology* p. 52.

(*Lawes* I.7.3 I.78.13) The free, rational, and intentional movement of the will, its character as a voluntary act, depends upon its orientation to 'things unsensible' through the use of reason.<sup>168</sup> While human agents develop human laws in response to the push and pull of their concrete lives, and they judge these laws through application to that life and critical reflection on that application. This interaction between appetite, will, and reason provides the context of human action according to positive law. The progression begins with the appetite.

*i. Appetite*

'The object of Appetite is whatsoever sensible good may be wished for.'  
(*Lawes* I.7.3 I.78.14-15) Human appetite, like every animal desire or appetite, directs an agent to specific end in response to the concrete, sensible environment of the agent. Physical, sensible, and natural needs such as thirst, hunger, and fatigue are not voluntary and their satisfaction, at least initially, is not voluntary in human agents. The range of appetite extends to the affections, 'joy, and griefe, and feare, and anger, with such like', whose presence in the human agent is beyond his or her control. (*Lawes* I.7.3 I.78.16-17) Appetite in the human agent, then, mirrors the desires of non-voluntary agents in the world who live according to the second eternal law at work in nature. These human and animal desires respond to a 'sensible goodness' apart from the intervening direction of reason, which is concerned with unsensible goodness. While these sensible states can short-circuit human reason calling forth an immediate response, appetite's correlation with

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168. 'By reason man attaineth unto the knowledge of thinges that are and are not sensible. It resteth therefore that we search how man attaineth unto the knowledge of such things unsensible as are to be knowne that they may be done.' (*Lawes* I.7.1 I.77.3-6)

sensible goodness does not *necessarily* put it at odds with the will's correlation with unsensible goodness:

'Goodness doth not moove by being, but by being apparent; ... [s]ensible goodnesse is most apparent, neere, and present; which causeth the appetite to be therewith strongly provoked...pursuit and refusal in the will do follow [when the] understanding apprehendeth, grounding it selfe upon sense, unlesse some higher reason do chance to teach the contrary.' (*Lawes* I.7.6 I.80.3-11)

Sensible goodness for Hooker can be present in the physical context giving rise to the reasonable action of the will or can overrun reason leading to sin. The common structure of appetite in human and animals runs parallel up to the point where human beings naturally begin to use their reason, when they become witting agents. This witting use of reason depends on discourse, the use of language, arising naturally in communal human life.

## *ii. Reason*

Whatever law, principle, or axiom reasonably directs the will, 'it was at the first found out by discourse, and drawne from out of the very bowels of heaven and earth.' (*Lawes* I.8.5 I.86.10-11) Discourse, including the laws and statutes making up society, comes about as a result of both the human desire to seek the fellowship of other human beings for communion *and* a need to band together to supply basic material needs. Societies of discourse began in this original attempt to regiment the various activities of human life to provide for the common good of the society.<sup>169</sup>

'For this cause, after men began to grow to a number: the first thing we reade they

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169. 'But for as much as we are not by ourselves sufficient to furnish ourselves with competent store of things needfull for such a life as our nature doth desire, a life fit for the dignitie of man; therefore to supply those defects and imperfections which are in us living single and solee by ourselves, we are naturally induced to seeke communion and fellowship with others. This was the cause of men's uniting themselves at the first in politique Societies, which societies could not be without Government, nor Government without a distinct kind of Law from that which hath bene alreadie declared. (*Lawes* I.10.1 I.96.8-16)

gave themselves unto was the tilling of the earth and the feeding of cattle.' (*Lawes* I.10.2 I.97.11-13)<sup>170</sup> In this need for material provision, human life is no different from animal life in its exercise of 'sensible knowledge,' but it differs from animal life in its ability to make use of reason to supply these material wants—e.g. tilling the earth, feeding the cattle, storing the grain—in the context of communal life. A long-term end can be a catalyst for the development of plan that requires a directing and binding law. The desire for the continuance of life initially produces these positive laws.

'The chiefest instrument of humane communion therefore is speech, because thereby we impart mutuallie one to another the conceiptes of our reasonable understanding.' (*Lawes* I.10.12 I.107.6-9) For voluntary agents, then, their reason comes about through the use of conceipts. Conceipts, synonymous with 'notions', are interpretive categories primarily worked out by individuals through reflection on their own experience or communicated through language in a society.<sup>171</sup> These conceipts originate in the 'painful'<sup>172</sup> search for knowledge through attention to causes by means of their effects, signs, and tokens. Human reason regularly observes the operations of the natural world according to the second eternal law to develop a range of proper responses to these recognised effects. The causality of the created world, its regular observance of the second eternal law, can be abstracted from by reasoning human agents to gain knowledge. This kind of knowledge does not follow from innate ideas but through the senses

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170. The good or virtuous life requires natural life: 'righteous life presupposeth life.' (*Lawes* I.10.2 I.97.17-20)

171. Hooker can, for instance, speak of his private conceipt (*Lawes* Preface.5.3 I.29.15) and the misdirection of believers by Puritans who teach them an erroneous preconcept. (*Lawes* Preface.3.9 I.16.18)

172. 'The search of knowledg is a thing painful.' (*Lawes* I.VII.7. I.81.10)



and language that make available certain ways of handling the world.<sup>173</sup> Growth in knowledge is possible because 'every effect doth after a sort containe, at least wise resemble, the cause from which it proceedeth.' (*Lawes* I.5.2 I.73.7-8) Knowledge drawn from these effects, which is inferior to knowledge of causes themselves, makes up the 'generall perswasion' and 'universal consent' of human beings. (*Lawes* I.8.3 I.83)<sup>174</sup>

These framing categories develop through their use in time by the individual person in parallel to the progression of society among multiple persons. Initially these concepts simply work to supply the material needs of the human person and community, more or less equal with other animals, but

'once [the soul] comprehendeth any thing above this, as the differences of time, affirmations, negations, and contradictions in speech; we then count it to have some use of naturall reason.' (*Lawes* I.6.3 I.75.24-27)

Natural reason, which can be aided and developed through 'the right helps of true art and learning', reaches beyond sensible things to a knowledge of things unsensible capable of directing human action by responding in and to its context through language. An agent becomes reasonable through obedience and receptivity to a community that directs the agent in the use of certain concepts. As part of the law adopted by the agent, these acquired concepts furnish the desired ends of the agent, or do not, and allow the agent to understand his or her context in a certain way by elucidating the meaning of certain effects. A society's concepts, therefore, are historical, contextual, and human while responding and approximating to the

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173. Olivier Loyer *L'Anglicanisme* p. 229.

174. Hooker does occasionally speak of an intuitive kind of knowledge. Lacking material or bodily senses, angels, ghostly natures, and spirits know intuitively. (*Lawes* I.8.4 I.84.27) Christ revealed himself to the Apostle 'even by intuitive revelation.' (*Lawes* Preface.6.3 I.31.12) The most assured knowledge is that which people have by 'plaine aspect and intuitive beholding.' (*Lawes* II.7.5 I.179.11-12) The intuitive vision of God, however, comes only 'in the world to come' (*Lawes* I.11.6 I.119.5-6) and to 'Angels and glorified Sainctes' presently (*Lawes* V.42.7 II.172.14). At the present time, however, we lack even this intuitive knowledge of ourselves. (*Lawes* III.1.2 I.195.22)

reality of the second eternal law. Their historicity does not undermine their realism because they continue to work in relation to various contexts conditioned by the second eternal law; they are appropriate to certain situations. By comprehending its context in light of speech, discourse, or language, as Hooker variously describes the medium, the human agent becomes a *voluntary* agent choosing to respond to various sensual stimuli—effects, signs, tokens—in a purposive manner; it *chooses* a law, a canon of action. Reason allows for human beings to receive a law at odds with simple appetite *and* to be responsible for that choice. Their chosen law, in turn, will provide the means for their own morally significant approximation of the second eternal law.

To give Hooker's example of this process, a person may naturally desire pleasure over pain, and yet, when confronted with the principle that

'small difficulties, when exceeding great good is sure to ensue; and on the other side momentanie benefites, when the hurt which they drawe after them is unspeakable, are not at all to be respected.' (Lawes I.8.5 I.85.22-25)

Reason, understanding the need for temporary suffering in the pursuit of future reward, can direct the will to endure appetitively repugnant suffering as the price of a future reward. Such an understanding of a unsensible good arises through a consideration of sensible life on the basis of inherited societal conceipts leading to altered behaviour for which an agent is personally and morally responsible. This basic axiom of human life provides the ground for specifically Christian teachings on the need to suffer presently in hope of future eternal reward taught by Christ (Matthew 16.26) and Paul (2 Corinthians 4.17): 'Christianitie to be embraced, whatsoever calamities in those times it was accompanied withall.' (Lawes I.8.5 I.85.31-32)

Hooker's account of reason's operation can be summed up in this way. The human use of reason arises out of humanity's natural desire to continue existing *in and as* a community through the accumulated historical wisdom of that community. A reasonable or intelligent will becomes possible through the direction of the agent in his or her act of judgment by these socially communicated laws, customs, and axioms. The 'rule of voluntary agents on earth' is the judgment that reason gives 'concerning the goodnes' of things to be done. (*Lawes* I.8.4 I.85.2-3) Reason judges according to basic principles fundamental to human knowledge as these are grasped when they are proposed to the mind.<sup>175</sup> These general axioms ground or direct reason as it takes up the task of judgment. While reason can grasp these basic axioms, it, nevertheless, does not necessarily occur to every human agent to immediately know these axioms, only to grasp them when they are proposed.<sup>176</sup> Right reason, when trying to accomplish a given task in a given situation, frames a canon of human action as closely as possible to the second eternal law by bringing the accumulated historical wisdom of a society to a contemporary context so that human action corresponds to God's intention. It accomplishes this task when it properly relates appetite and will.

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175. 'The maine principles of reason are in themselves apparent. For to make nothing evident of it selfe unto mans understanding were to take away al possibility of knowing any thing. And herein that of *Theophrastus* is true, *They that seeke a reason of all things do utterly overthrow Reason*. In every kind of knowledge some such grounds there are, as that being proposed the mind doth presently embrace them as free from all possibilitie of error, clear and manifest without prooffe.' (*Lawes* I.8.5 I.85.6-13)

176. 'If here it be demaunded howe it cometh to passe that this being common unto all lawes which are made, there should be found even in good lawes so great varietie as there is; wee must note the reason hereof to bee the sundry particular endes, whereunto the different disposition of that subject or matter, for which lawes are provided, causeth them to have especiall respect in making laws.' (*Lawes* I.10.9 I.103.27-32)

According to Paul Avis, for Hooker, in the world governed by a law given by God, '[the] vocation of reason is to bring human existence into conformity with the order and harmony in the nature of things.' Paul Avis *Search of Authority: Anglican Theological Method from the Reformation to the Enlightenment* p. 114.

### *iii. Will*

Hooker differentiates the will from the appetite through their respective objects:

'But of one thing we must have speciall care, as being a matter of no small moment; and that is, how the will, properly and strictly taken, as it is of things which are referred unto the ende that man desireth, differeth greatly from that inferior naturall desire which we call appetite. The object of appetite is whatsoever sensible good may be wished for; the object of wil is that good which reason doth lead us to seek.' (*Lawes* I.7.3 I.78.10-17)

Will mirrors appetite as a form of desire, but differs from appetite by being oriented through reason. It is intellectual or reasonable desire of goodness.<sup>177</sup> The objects of the will are those unsensible things discerned by reason as something to be done or as rules of action in a material context. The operation of the human will, therefore, is a complex process holistically related to the rational and material life of the human being as it begins to imitate its creator. Will's relation to appetite and to reason enables it to adopt a positive law of working, parallel to the second eternal law, non-arbitrarily and voluntarily in pursuit of some given end.

The will chooses non-arbitrarily because its choosing occurs within and in reaction to a concrete context. 'Appetite,' rooted in responsive affections and always tied to the physical senses, 'is the wills solicitor, and the will is appetites controller.' (*Lawes* I.7.3 I.78.22-23) 'Sensible goodness' provokes the appetite through the senses, and this provocation comes to the will in such a way that it can either follow the appetite or refuse it. (*Lawes* I.7.6 I.80.6) Although not always a topic of great reflection, even the basic activities of eating, drinking, and sleeping pass through the reasonable control of the will in response to a concrete situation. The material desires and bodily senses shared with natural agents ground a human

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177. See the discussion by Voak in *Richard Hooker and Reformed Theology* pp. 52-53.

agent's act of judgment as the material about which reasonable decisions must be made. Ideally, the will freely responds to these situations through the mediation of reason to choose what is good and right in some situation: to pursue a law in correlation to a desired end in a given context. Sense data and a material context are, for human agents, necessary but not sufficient conditions for a judgment to be made according to a law.

Human beings adopt a law of working voluntarily, for Hooker, precisely because they *choose* it. To make a choice is 'is to will one thing before another' and '[choice] there is not unlesse the thing which we take be so in our power that we might have refused and left it.' (*Lawes* I.7.2 I.77.29-30) Hooker understands human freedom as liberty of spontaneity and indifference.<sup>178</sup> The human will is spontaneously free when it chooses to act in such a way without coercion or compulsion. The will desires to choose what is good, but it is not compelled to choose the good in such a way that it becomes passive like the appetite. The human is indifferently free when the agent could have chosen otherwise.<sup>179</sup> The will, then, can refuse when it is presented with some good: 'if reason have taught [the mind] rightly to be good, yet not so apparently that the mind receiveth it with utter impossibility of being otherwise, still there is place left for the will to take or leave.' (*Lawes* I.8.6 I.80.11-14) The will can choose to 'negate' some perceived goodness in an act of judgment involving will, reason, and appetite.

This understanding of the voluntary character of human action is important in two ways. First, as will become clearer later on, the problem of sinful human action is not simply the result of insufficient knowledge. A solution to the problem of sin cannot be worked out *solely* through the communication of knowledge even

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178. Voak *Richard Hooker and Reformed Theology* ch. 1.

179. *Dublin Fragments* 1 IV.101-102 and 22 IV.126-128

if it requires some such communication. Second, the freedom of voluntary agents to choose their actions through the mediation of reason allows them to be held responsible for those actions: 'rewards and punishments doe alwaies presuppose something willingly done well or ill...*Take away the will, and all actes are equall: That which we doe not, and would doe, is commonly accepted as done.*' (Lawes I.9.1 I.94.30-95.3) Individual agents bear responsibility for their own actions as agents answerable for those means they use to accomplish their desired ends. The use of culturally disseminated axioms, customs, and conceipts do not allow human agents to excuse themselves from meriting some reward or punishment for their actions in pursuit of some end. Human agents naturally pursue 'blessedness' through works, which they are responsible for, that nevertheless fail to merit the desired reward.<sup>180</sup>

## *II. A Holistic Operation: Critical Reason*

To sum up, the human agent mirrors the divine agent in his 'maner of working: so that whatsoever we worke as men, the same we doe wittingly worke and freely.' (Lawes I.7.2 I.77.21-23) As voluntary agents, human beings act in the material world in response to the pressures of their concrete context. Their action, then, is non-arbitrary by being rooted in the senses as they navigate the world around them. Human action is, in turn, voluntary in two ways. First, the action goes forward according to a definite desired plan confected in the interaction of natural

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180. 'Rewards doe alwaies presuppose such duties performed as are rewardable. Our naturall meanes therefore unto blessednes are our workes; nor is it possible that nature should ever finde any other way to salvation than onely this. But examine the workes which we do, and since the firste foundation of the world what one can say, My wayes are pure? Seing then all flesh is guiltie of that for which God hath threatened eternallie to punish, what possibilitie is there this way to be saved?' (Lawes I.11.5 I.115.27-116.3 )

appetite and historically positioned reason. Reason directs human desire in a unique way producing intelligent desire, the will. Second, this rational or intelligent desire can choose to refrain from action or to overcome the appetite thus decisively separating human agents from natural agents, e.g. other animals or plants, who lack this ability. The communally formed reason in human agents creates the possibility of their relative freedom from the sensitive appetite. This freedom, however, demands human agents be responsible for their actions in a unique way. The natural, for humans, progression of appetite into reason and will irrevocably binds responsibility and freedom in the non-arbitrary and voluntary adoption of law by human agents.

Following this line of thinking, however inadvertently he may have done it, Hooker's defence of reason within Christian understanding sets up a historicised view of doctrine parallel to later Modern positions.<sup>181</sup> Hooker understood the natural order to be present to the human intellect such that it could be engaged with as a critical pressure upon humanly developed ideas. By making reason publicly available, Hooker's theology kept open the ability of all people to know whatever is 'absolutely unto all men's salvation necessarie.' (*Lawes Preface*.3.2 I.13.8)<sup>182</sup> Average lay people possess an adequate grasp of reason to handle the foundation of the faith. A refusal to heed the findings of human reason leads to heresy:

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181. Beiser *Sovereignty* p. 46. cf. 'In one sense, a very important sense from the point of view of theological method, Calvin is medieval where Hooker shows the beginnings of something different.' H.R. McAadoo *The Spirit of Anglicanism* 25. 'Yet, and this is the important point, Hooker can hardly be described as medieval any more than he can be called Thomist, though these are his sources and inspiration: doctrine is not copied and added to Anglican spirituality but absorbed into it.' Martin Thornton *English Spirituality* 233, cf. 224-226. On this point see Nigel Voak *Richard Hooker and Reformed Theology*.

Brad Gregory describes the continuity of the Medieval, Reformation, and Modern periods as the continual inheritance of a set of problems and questions in *The Unintended Reformation: How a Religious Revolution Secularised Society* (Harvard: HUP, 2012). See especially the introduction pp. 1-24.

182. Also quoted and discussed in 'Societie Supernaturall' p. 316.

'In a word, the Catholique Fathers did good unto all by that knowledge, whereby heretiques hindering the truth in many, might have furthered therewith themselves, but that obstinatlie following their owne ambitious or otherwise corrupted affections, in stead of framing their wills to maynteyne that which reason taught, they bent their wits to finde how reason might seem to teach that which their wills were set to maynteyne. (*Lawes* III.8.8 I.225.21-28) <sup>183</sup>

The correction of corrupted ambitions required an effective means of reform according to reason, a canon of judgment not dependent on the desires of human subjects.

Reason, then, requires individual labour, investment, and expression. As in the above discussion of the discernment of assurance in the Christian life, contingent occurrences in human life provide the material out of which the will of God is discerned in corrigible and fallible interpretations. Yielding to this reason by the individual is not compliance with a set of revealed dictates, that would be to turn again to *the law*, but is a response to an obscurely understood wisdom at work in the specific, historical, and changing world of each individual. Reason's personal character discourages Christian thought from assuming a false permanence or untoward insight:

'But consider I beseech you first as touching the Apostle, how that wherein he was so resolute and peremptorie, our Lord Jesus Christ made manifest unto him even by intuitive revelation, wherein there was no possibilitie of error. That which you are perswaded of, ye have it no otherwise than by your own only probable collection, and therefore such bold asseverations as in him were admirable, should in your mouthes but argue rashnes.' (*Lawes* Preface.6.3 I.31.10-16)

Criticism, even or especially self-criticism, was necessary for the Christian life as long as righteousness remained partial and human knowledge of God incomplete.

Criticism played a major role in the Reformation and the rise of Humanism, a fact endorsed by Hooker's associate Edwin Sandys who, after having made a tour

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183. See the helpful discussion of this point in S.L. Bethell *The Cultural Revolution of the Seventeenth Century* (New York: Roy Publishers, 1951) p. 32.



of Europe, described the Protestant task as opening up 'the streames of the evidence of reason.'<sup>184</sup> The public presence of reason, though, opens up the space for the patient work of criticism to frame church laws. While all may be able to grasp the basics of Christian belief, elite thinkers skilled in logic and sufficiently erudite possess the proper means of discerning the proper judgements in various cases and situations.<sup>185</sup> The critical vocation does not, however, result in the total destruction of Christian belief. It responds to developments placed upon it so that divine wisdom can be maintained precisely through changes in polity.<sup>186</sup> '[M]en doe not presume to chaunge Gods ordinance, but they yeelde thereunto requiring it selfe to be changed.' (*Lawes* III.10.5 I.243.30-32) The reform of church laws begins with asking about the suitability of a law to accomplish the desired end in this given context. The end remains the same but the means is open to pragmatic questioning.

Hooker sums up this interaction in a description of making religious laws:

'The most naturall and religious course in making of lawes is that the matter of them be taken from the judgment of the wisest in those thinges which they are to concerne... Howbeit when all which the wisdom of all sortes can doe is done for devising of lawes in the Church it is the generall consent of all that giveth them the forme and vigor of lawes without which they could be no more unto us then the Counseles of Physitions to the sick. ' (*Lawes* VIII.6.11 III.403.10-22)

Responsibility to the church, or political society more broadly, means reform cannot be simply imposed by the elite upon those below them. All believers are bound or constrained by a responsibility to maintain the means for perpetuating their identities as God's adopted children. Rowan Williams sets out Hooker's view

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184. Quoted in Shuger 'Societe Supernaturall' p. 313.

185. See Hooker's scathing remark at (*Lawes* II.7.6 I.183.14-19) '...a man whose capacitie will scarce serve him to utter five wordes in sensible maner, blusheth not in any doubt concerning matter of scripture to thinke his own bare Yea, as good as the Nay of all the wise, grave, and learned judgements that are in the whole world. Which insolency must be repress, or it will be the verie bane of Christian religion.'

186. Rowan Williams *Anglican Identities* pp. 48-49.

of this responsibility: 'Thus the eternal, non-negotiable constraint put upon us by Christ and Scripture has to do with how we are made ... participants in Christ's everlasting filiation.'<sup>187</sup> The positive material shape of this relationship, Jesus of Nazareth, provides a canon for responsible action by the Christian believer, and a way of personally navigating his or her own reasoned exploration of the self.

The ramifications of this move for Christian knowledge are made clear by Egil Grislis:

'...truth is available and can be recorded with an impressive measure of accuracy, yet it is never possessed in such a way that the process of the search could be prematurely ended and the partial insights of age absolutized. The failure to take such a stand is the weakness of both the Puritans and Rome.'<sup>188</sup>

The ideal basis for Christian knowledge developed by elite theologians is not their own insights, but their ability to represent how the actual belief of Christians is constrained by the figure of Jesus Christ.<sup>189</sup>

If reason, and the human will, are responsible to reality in this way for Hooker, nevertheless the simple correction of mistaken ideas will not cure humanity of its sin. The will, the habitual centre of human action, still chooses, despite knowing better, what is wrong. The nature of this failure sets the stage for the correction of the human will in the work of Jesus Christ. I turn now to that failure.

### *III. Sin*

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187. Rowan Williams *Anglican Identities* p. 47.

188. Egil Grislis 'The Hermeneutical Problem in Richard Hooker' in *Studies in Richard Hooker: Essays Preliminary to an Edition of his Work*, ed. W. S. Hill (Cleveland, 1972 ) p. 170.

189. This is why in order to have a productive debate with Travers and Cartwright, Hooker sees a need to begin with an account of reality and the nature of humanity's relation to God. He writes the Lawes to give this larger picture of humanity's place within the world, to show the dynamics human action in history and society that can be grasped by reason as the necessary approach to understanding Christ's work.

Even if human reason, in its experience of the density of the natural world, should be able to orient human acts towards the fulfilment of its natural desire through a law similar to the second eternal law, Hooker is well aware humanity fails to actualise the goodness inherent in its natural desires, to operate as it should, denying it the attainment of its perfections. Humanity naturally desires a triple perfection:

'first, a sensuall, consisting in those things which very life it selfe requireth either as necessary supplementes, or as beauties and ornaments thereof;' intellectual, consisting in the acquisition of knowledge through the use of reason; 'lastly a spirituall and divine, consisting in those things whereunto we tend by supernatural meanes here, but cannot here attaine unto them.' (*Lawes* I.11.4 I.114.19-25)

Apart from Christ's work, the final perfection cannot be actualised at all and the first two only in part. The identity of the First Cause, the point of providential order, remains obscure to humanity.

#### *A. The First Failure*

Human beings fail to actualise the first two perfections, sensual and intellectual, through the misdirection and sinful cultivation communicated by the laws of evil societies.

'[L]ewde and wicked custome, beginning perhaps at the first amongst few, afterwards spreading into greater multitudes,' inures 'the mind by long practise, and so leaving there a sensible impression, prevaieth more than reasonable perswasion what way so ever.' (*Lawes* I.8.11; *Lawes* I.7.6 I.91.30-31; I.80.18-20)

The conceipts and customs of a particular society deprive their users from making proper use of their 'natural understanding.' Misguided reason does not direct or restrain the appetite, but, instead, the sensual desire of the appetite overthrows the intellectual desire of the will to satisfy its own devices. The element of compulsion

in this overtaking of the will by the appetite *could* excuse the sinner from responsibility. Voluntary agents remain responsible, however, because this malfunction evidences a desire for a *lesser* goodness present in the good order of nature chosen by an indolent reason.<sup>190</sup> The lack of adequate concepts closes down the possibility of an agent possessing the law appropriate to a given situation. A way of being in and reacting to the world does not appear because of the conceptual range available to the believer, even if he or she were properly predisposed.

The painful nature of seeking out knowledge prevents those casually making use of inherited knowledge from critical reflection at odds with the interpretive concepts they have grown quite literally comfortable using. The source of this indolence is 'divine malediction' creating an 'originall weaknes in the instruments [of reason], without which the understanding part is not able in this world by discourse to worke...' (*Lawes* I.7.7 I.81.12-19) The malformed concepts of a sinful society continue to propagate in its members who—as *members*—are responsible for their use of those sinful concepts. In this process, the freedom present in the use of reason, its witting and unsensible direction of the will, is subverted by being bound to the sensuous, local, and short-term goodness desired by the appetite. Ideally, of course, the process operates in the other direction: reason *rightly* chooses the most appropriate, fitting, and apt means of accomplishing its desired end. The fittingness of reasonable goodness is its beauty, '[in] which consideration the Græcians most divinely have given to the active perfection of men a name expressing both beautie and goodnes: [Καλοκαγαθία.]' (*Lawes* I.8.1 I.82.23-25) The subversion of reason by the appetite denies the agent the freedom

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190. *Lawes* I.VII.7. I.80-81

it should find in the accuracy of discourse; reason fails to see the goodness actually present to it in its context leading to inappropriate judgments.

### *B. The Second Failure*

Human beings, if they fail to obtain this perfection of beauty and goodness, are further frustrated in their desire and unable to actualise their spiritual perfection. According to Hooker, the natural object of human desire is a non-instrumental infinite goodness: 'No good is infinite but only God; therefore he our felicitie and blisse.' (*Lawes* I.11.2 I.112.11-12) The desire for God is natural in human beings once they begin to use language, to reason, to reflect for non-instrumental means on what might be beyond sense. The freedom from the dictates of appetitive desire reaches completion in the satiation of rational desire in a goodness standing above reason as unsensible goods stand above sense.<sup>191</sup> In the present time, however, humanity remains incapable of reaching this ultimate goodness because of sin. Sin prevents humanity from obtaining the righteousness associated with this goodness as a reward. The only way to reach this goodness, then, is

'surely a way which is supernaturall, a way which could never have entered into the heart of man as much as once to conceive or imagine, if God him selfe had not revealed it extraordinarilie.' (*Lawes* I.11.5 I.116.5-7)

God's desire to communicate this supernatural way is located in the *first* eternal law setting down how God will handle the creation emerging through the second law. The communication of this supernatural way depending solely on

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191. '[Man does not remain content with worldly things] but doth further covet, yea oftentimes manifestly pursue with great sedulitie and earnestness, that which cannot stand him in any stead for vitall use; that which exceedeth the reach of sense; yea, somewhat above capacitie of reason, somewhat divine and heavenly, which with hidden exultation it rather surmiseth than conceyvet; somewhat it seeketh, and what that is directly it knoweth not, yet very intentive desire thereof doth so incite it, that all other knowne delights and pleasures are layde aside, they geve place to the search of this but onely suspected desire.' (*Lawes* I.11.4 I.115.5-13)

God's will to communicate to it humanity is not a response to any created activity. 'Predestination to life' is 'infinitle ancienter then the actuall worke of creation' even if it presupposes the work of creation. (*DF* 2 IV.102.26-27)<sup>192</sup> The accomplishment of this predestination requires, given the state of human nature, the removal of impediments to this life in order to communicate this bliss, but the proper operation of this communication, its law of activity given the nature of its recipient, requires that it be *given* to humanity. As active, human agents, were it not for the present imperfections of body and mind, are capable of God by understanding, 'as He is that sovereign Truth which comprehendeth the rich treasures of all wisdom,' and will, 'as He is that sea of Goodness whereof whoso tasteth shall thirst no more;' reason and will, however, receive their orientation through the person's receptive appetite and affection, 'as it is receptive, [the soul shall] be also perfected with those supernaturall passions of joye peace and delight.' (*Lawes* I.11.3 I.113.22-23) The eternally predestined supernatural re-orientation, the communication of and union with God's life, makes contact with sinful beings at the point of their dependence, the communally formed appetite and its affections, in order to begin the progression from appetite to reason to will once more. Any other means of accomplishing this redemption would make its recipients less than human in the end. The sensual, material, and affective point of contact between God and human desire capable of reforming and completing the movement from appetite to will is Jesus of Nazareth.

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192. See also: "God hath revealed a way mysticall and supernaturall, a way directing unto the same ende of life by a course which groundeth it selfe upon the guiltiness of sinne, and through sinne desert of condemnation and death. For in this way the first thing is the tender compassion of God respecting us drowned and swallowed up in myserie; the next is redemption out of the same by the pretious death and merit of a mightie Saviour, which hath witnessed of himself saying, *I am the way*, the way that leadeth us from miserie into blisse. This supernatural way had God in himselfe prepared before all worldes.' (*Lawes* I.11.6 I.118.15-23)

#### *IV. Conclusion*

The project of Re-Christianisation, for Hooker, could not be pursued simply through a doctrinal or intellectual creation especially when this doctrine turned so much Christian experience into a meaningless blank. The solution of this problem required a deeper change in the nature of the agent, his or her law. The law of Christian agents needs to be non-arbitrary, appropriate to a situation, and voluntary, freely chosen by the agent. The law, then, has to respond to the concrete push and pull of a given situation such that it accords with or corrects the historically mediated conceptual resources available to the agent in his or her life. The conceptual resources available outside of the Christian church, however, fail to provide the adequate resources for agents to direct their desire properly to God, to provide an over-arching direction to human life. The dynamics of the formation of human piety move from a basic pre-reflective dependence on God, which is available to all creatures, through the reflective acquisition of and expression in language—a *historical* process for Hooker—to a frustration in the vagaries of sin. The basic existential situation of human life apart from Christ points towards this need for redemption in Christ and that this redemption occurs through *both* a reorientation of the agent's contextually delimited habitual centre *and* the communication of concepts appropriate to that centre. The verification of these new concepts *as human concepts* could then come about through their use and communication in a society of human agents. A new law for action would emerge in a way appropriate to voluntary agents continually approximating the second eternal law expressing the character of the first.

Hooker's earlier definition of the dynamics of justification pushes towards this pragmatic dynamic:

'There is a glorifyinge righteousnes of men in the Worlde to comme, and there is a justefying and a sanctefyinge righteousnes here. *The righteousness wherewith we shalbe clothed* in the world to come, is both perfecte but not inherente, that whereby we are sanctified, inherent but not perfecte. (*Justification* 3 V.109.6-11)

Justification provides a given determinative context of action, a situation wherein Christian law will be non-arbitrary, while sanctification is the voluntary personal adoption of the law appropriate to such a context. For this to occur apart from an arbitrary divine command, God would need to establish a context able to transmit this way of life and a human will to adopt it: an instantiation of human law at one with the first eternal law. God would need to be once again the author of a human law so that human agents could work as he does. This work is what God does when he acts in Jesus Christ. God's acting in Christ to complete this dynamic of formation is the subject of the next chapter.



## Chapter 4. Hooker on the Effect of Christ

While the last chapter showed the setting and the difficulty of human life, this chapter shows the way in which the solution begins to be worked out in Jesus of Nazareth. The formative touch of God in Christ begins to make a difference and specifically Christian learning becomes possible as the pragmatic evaluation of inherited traditions and personal desires under the specific influence of Christ's life.

It is a doctrine of justification worked out along the lines given at the end of the last chapter, a historical imputation of Christ's life as the productive cause of an evolving inherent righteousness, that sets up Hooker's larger vision of the sequel of the incarnation in the church. A key textual source in the sermons on justification precipitating the *Lawes* was Paul's letter to the Galatians, especially the argument that Christian believers are set free from the requirement of an external law in matters pertaining to salvation. Hooker sums up his point with a composite quotation from chapter four

*'seeing yee knowe god, or rather are knowne of god, howe turn you againe to ympotent rudymentes? The lawe ingendreth servauntes, her children are in bondage, they which are begotten by the gospels are free. Bretheren, we are not children of the servaunte, but of the free woman, and will yee yett be under the lawe?'* (*Justification* 26 V.144.14-19)<sup>193</sup>

Because believers are known by God they have been set free from the impotent rudiments of arbitrary laws. The vertical relationship with God enables horizontal

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193. At this point Hooker is making his case for the possibility of Roman Catholic believers being saved. To deny this, as his Puritan opponents do, is to give up on justification by faith, as the circumcision party in Galatia did. Justification by faith applies even to those who do not believe it.

relationships of a certain kind within the church. The order, as Deborah Shuger has shown, is important as union with God in Christ comes with the unity of the church:

'[c]ompassion, fellowship and mutual love seem possible only when relations among persons are mediated by a 'ghostly fellowship with God and Christ and Saints' (VIII.IV.6) [and so Hooker] consistently politicizes and demystifies horizontal relationship.'<sup>194</sup>

At the moment of determination before God, popular and elite piety elide into each other through their common source in Jesus Christ.<sup>195</sup> Within the church the popular beliefs of members do not stand apart from those of the elite, well trained theologian. Hooker will not allow theoretical problems to get in the way of conformation to Christ:

'let curious and sharp witted men beat their heades about what questions themselves will, the verie letter of the worde of Christ giveth plaine securitie that these mysteries doe as nailes fasten us to his verie crosse...with touching it sanctifieth, it enlighteneth with beliefe, it trulie conformeth us unto the image of Jesus Christ. (*Lawes* V.67.12 II.343.5-21)

The priority of God, Christ's vertical action, makes possible the community of piety, but this community does not solidify into a fixed horizontal set of relationships. Christ's vertical action takes place in the soul through the material and historical mediation of Word and sacrament from which it proceeds to effect the corporeal and the mental. Historical contact with Christ makes a difference.

The nature of the church, what it does, follows from its grounding in Christ's act. The formative work of Christ occurs

'because [Christ] is in us as a movinge and workinge cause, from which manie blessed effects are reallie found to ensue, and that in sundrie both kindes and degrees all tendinge to eternall happiness. (*Lawes* V.56.10 II.242.8-11)

Christ is a cause at work in the Christian life leading to the final end of eternal happiness. The communion of God with humanity in Christ is practical and

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194. Debora Shuger "Societie Supernaturall" in *Richard Hooker and the Construction of Christian Community* pp. 322-323.

195. Shuger 'Societie Supernaturall' p. 323.

transformative of human beings. God's work, as a work on humanity, in Christ is a historical one:

'It is too cold an interpretation, whereby some men expounde our beinge in Christ to importe nothinge els, but onlie that the selfe same nature, which maketh us to be men, is in him, and maketh him man as wee are. For what man in the world is there which hath not so farre forth communion with Jesus Christ? It is not this that can sustaine the waight of such sentences as speake the mysterie of our coherence with Jesus Christ.... And his Church he frameth out the verie flesh, the verie wounded and bleedinge side of the Sonne of man...So that in him even accordinge to his manhood wee accordinge to our heavinlie beinge are as branches in that roote out of which they growe.' (*Lawes* V.56.7 II.239.13-31)

Coherence with Christ follows from the humanity of Christ re-constituting the habitual centre of human life in a human and divine act. I will now turn to Hooker's account of how God is in Christ as a cause or force leading human agents to conform to God's will, to participate in the law of God's being.

### *I. Incarnation*

For Hooker, the importance of the incarnation, like the Creator's presence to creation more generally, does not make it an obvious matter and the manner of its working continues to test human understanding. The divine mystery of the incarnation is 'more true than plaine.' (*Lawes* V.52.1 II.211.29-30) Hooker's primary interest is the fact of the incarnation—its Christological problems—as the base and guide of religious practice rather than any speculative or detached account of the incarnation.<sup>196</sup> Hooker's Christological treatise, in fact, serves to introduce Hooker's discussion of Christ's presence in the eucharist and in the church:

'Sacraments are the powerfull instrumentes of God to eternall life. For as our naturall life consisteth in the union of the bodie with the soule; so our life

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196. 'Mais ce qui l'intéresse, c'est davantage le problème christologique: l'incarnation dans la personne même du Christ, puis l'incarnation du Christ poursuivie dans son Eglise. Et quand il traite des personnes, ce qui le retient, c'est moins leur distinction dans l'unité d'une même substance, ou les propriétés de chacune, que leur participation réciproque. Bref la divinisation de notre nature, notre filiation, notre inclusion à Dieu par le Christ, tel est le point qu'il veut traiter surtout.' Loyer 477

supernaturall in the union of the soule with God. And for as much as there is no union of God with man without that meane between both which is both, it seemeth requisite that we first consider how God is in Christ, then how Christ is in us, and how the sacramentes do serve to make us pertakers of Christ.' (*Lawes* V.50.3 II.208.19-209.1)

God is in Christ in a unique way so that Christ can, in turn, be in the church in a certain way through its celebration of the sacraments. The sacraments are an experiential base for this Christology and the historical site of the experience of the transmission of grace.

Hooker sets up his Christology in a general way:

'there are but fower things which concurre to make compleate the whole state of our Lord Jesus Christ: his deitie, his manhood, the conjunction of both, and the distinction of the one from the other being joyned in one.' (*Lawes* V.54.10 II.226.23-26)

Beyond these rough contours, Hooker does not give an exhaustive account of the incarnation. Rather, the *Lawes* set up the boundaries within which a responsible Christology will operate through an examination of what the incarnation accomplishes.<sup>197</sup> The incarnation, for Hooker, has a point, a goal. Working according to the law of his being—the first eternal law—God acts in the incarnation voluntarily with a purpose in light of the context given in the world, i.e. non-

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197. Compare the historical summary from *Lawes* V.52.1-4 II.211-216 with the final paragraph of his *Justification* sermon: 'Now to you, beloved, which have heard these thinges, I will use no other wordes of admonition, then those which are offred me by St James: *My brethren, have not the faithe of our glorious Lord Jhesus Christe in repsect of persons*: Yea are not nowe to learne that as of it self yt is not hurtfull, so neither shoudl yt be to any man scandalous and offensive in doubtfull cases to heare the different judgments of men, be yt that Caephas hath on interpretation, and Apollos hath an other: that Paule is of this mynde, and Barnabas of that. If this offend you, the faulte is yours. Carrye peaceable myndes, and ye may have comforte by this varietye. Nowe the God of peace give you peaceable myndes, and turne yt to your everlasting comforte.' (*Justification* 40 V.169.10-20) The summary shows that Hooker envisions the ecumenical councils as expressing agreement 'throughout the world' (*Lawes* V.52.2 II.212.23-24) while still being able to chart the drift from Cyril's orthodox position to that of Eutyches. An orthodox description of Christ *could* lead to a heretical position when pressed or interpreted in a certain way: 'For as Nestorius teaching rightlie that God and man are distinct natures, did thereupon misinferre that in Christ those natures can by no conjunction make one person; so Eutyches, of sound beliefe as touching theire true personall copulation, became unsound by denyinge the difference which still continueth betwene the one and the other Nature. Wee must therefore keepe warilie a middle corse, shunninge both that distraction of persons wherein Nestorius went awrie, and also this later confusion of Natures which deceived Eutyches.' (*Lawes* V.52.4 II.215.29-216.4) Undue precision can be a prelude to a heretical move for Hooker.

arbitrarily. The goal of this 'incomprehensible mystery' is the salvation of humanity from sin, a task appropriate to the Creator, through humanity itself, convenient as the result is a righteous humanity, such that 'there is cause sufficient why divine nature should assume humane, that so God might be in Christ reconciling to him selfe the world.' (*Lawes* V.51.3 II.210.25-211.1) The taking on of human nature allows God to bring about human salvation *and Christ's humanity is, in some sense, instrumental to that accomplishment.*<sup>198</sup> The burden of Hooker's treatise on the incarnation, which forms the centrepiece of most substantial book in the *Lawes*, will be to show *how* God exists in Jesus Christ and *why* the specifics of his life begin the propagation of a new law directing human life through *this man*, Jesus of Nazareth. He describes *how* the incarnation happens through a rehearsal of historical Christological controversies leading to the measured inexactness of Chalcedonian doctrine.<sup>199</sup> He sets out *why* God became this man through an account of Christ's achievement of a perfect and communicable human righteousness. To see *how* and *why* the incarnation takes place according to Hooker, I will now turn to his understanding of Christ's person and work.

#### A. *The Person of Christ*<sup>200</sup>

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198. And as Christ tooke manhood that by it he might be capable of death whereunto hee humbled him selfe, so because manhood is the proper subject of compassion and feeling pittie, which maketh the sceptre of Christes regencie even in the kingdom of heaven amiable, he which without our nature could not on earth suffer for the synnes of the world, doth now also by meanes thereof both make intercession to God for synners and exercise dominion over all men with a true, a naturall, and a sensible touch of mercie *Lawes* V.51.3. II.211.15-23

199. On Hooker's debts to Augustine, John of Damascus, Cyril of Alexandria, and Thomas Aquinas see David Neelands 'Christology and the Sacraments.' in *A Companion to Richard Hooker* ed. Torrance Kirby (Leiden: Brill, 2008) pp. 369-370.

200. Hooker himself does not use this division explicitly. The division, however, allows for a clearer picture of his Christology to emerge and will make parallels to Schleiermacher easier to see.

The point of union between deity and manhood in the incarnation is the second person of the Trinity: the particular personal subsistence that takes on human nature in Jesus of Nazareth.<sup>201</sup> Without denying the integrity of Christ's human nature, Hooker makes the divine person primary and determinative of human nature possessed by that person: 'both divine and humane, [Christ has] no other personall subsistence then divine, because the Sonne of God took not to him selfe a mans person, but the nature only of a man.' (*Lawes* V.52.3 II.214.25-27) To see how Hooker understands the divine person's possession of human nature, I will begin with the divine person and then move on to the way in which this person possesses the natures.

i. *The Second Person of the Trinity*

Two attributes of the first eternal law, God's being, require the second person of the Trinity to be the basis of Christ's humanity.

First, God remains indissolubly *One* for Hooker. God 'very Oneness,' is a unique and singular unity of substance without composition. (*Lawes* I.2.2. I.59.20) The unity of substance, however, does not preclude the three divine persons from possessing the single divine substance in a manner peculiar, particular, and appropriate to their subsistence. A personal subsistence is a certain manner of being unique to itself that, nevertheless, is constituted through its relation to others who possess the same substance or essence. The person is the common substance plus whatever particular accidents constitute its individual characteristics.<sup>202</sup> In God a divine person subsists in a way completely unlike the other persons of the Trinity

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201. David Neelands summarises Hooker's Cyrilline Christology: 'Christ *is* divine; Christ *has* human nature.'p. 371.

202. Hooker's stated source for this account of the Trinity is John of Damascus Orthodox Faith III.6. Neelands also brings out parallels to Augustine and Aquinas.

and this difference is an entirely different relation.<sup>203</sup> The Father subsists as the origin, 'altogether of himself...of none;' the Son subsists as one from the Father; the Spirit subsists as one from the Father and the Son. (*Lawes* V.LI.1) A personal subsistence, in the Trinity at least, is the way in which the entire substance of the Trinity, its singular unchanging essence, possesses certain characteristic properties constituted by the Trinitarian relations.

In this way, the description of a person 'as a substance plus accidents' holds as a description of the Trinitarian persons<sup>204</sup>: '[I]n everie person there is implied both the substance of God which is one, and also that propertie which causeth the same person reallie and trulie to differ from the other two.' (*Lawes* V.51.1 II.209.20-22) Like other substances, the divine substance of the One God does not exist independently of its instantiation in and possession by actual personal subsistences since substance is not a quasi-material something existing apart from particular persons.<sup>205</sup> The Trinitarian persons, Father, Son and Spirit, are their relations: the difference of relation *is* their subsistence and the relation is the personal 'accident' possessing the substance. The Triune God is the single substance instantiated in the relations of these subsistences: it exists in no other way

Second, In the incarnation God does not *change* into a person, but the second person of the Trinity takes up flesh; this divine person becomes a person in time.<sup>206</sup> The personal subsistence of the Son is the divine substance 'with this

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203. 'By the guift of eternall generation Christ hath receaved of the father one and in number self same substance which the father hath of himself unreceived from anie other. For everie *beginninge is a father* unto that which cometh of it; and every *offspringe is a Sonne* unto that out of which it groweth... it followeth hereupon that whatsoever Christ hath common unto him with his heavenly father, the same of necessitie must be *given* him, but naturallie and eternallie given...' *Lawes* V.54.2 II.220.29-221.9

204. John of Damascus *An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith* III.6 in *Saint John of Damascus: Writings* trans. Frederic H. Chase, Jr. (New York: Fathers of the Church, 1958) p. 279.

205. John of Damascus *Exact Exposition* p. 279.

206. *Lawes* V.LII.3 II.213-215

propertie *to be of the father*' and this divine person truly and actually possesses human nature in Jesus of Nazareth. (*Lawes* V.51.1 II.209.17) The second person can possess human nature in this way because its personal subsistence already has a certain character within the Godhead: the second person of the Trinity is a 'receyver' who receives the gift of divinity from the Father. (*Lawes* V.54.1 II.220.23)<sup>207</sup> The Father gives the Son the gift of eternal generation establishing through that gift part of the eternal taxis of relationships within the Godhead. The gift communicates 'the selfe same substance which the father hath of him self unreceived from anie other.' (*Lawes* V.54.2 II.221.1-2) The Son, the Second Person, is 'God by beinge of God, light by issuinge out of light' as the divine substance plus the accident or personal characteristic of receptivity or dependence. (*Lawes* V.54.2 II.221.6-7)<sup>208</sup>

Christ's earthly life is a repetition of the gift he eternally receives from the Father. Furthermore, the relationship of the second person to the Father and the Spirit cannot cease to exist or be altered in the incarnation without destroying the nature of God, who just is this set of relations.<sup>209</sup> At the same time, the fact that the second person, whose nature it is to be given, comes into time as Jesus Christ will determine the shape of that earthly life by uniting the divine and human natures asymmetrically.

## *ii. The Possession of Natures*

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207. Actually Christ is 'by three degrees a receyver' First, he is the Son of God; second, his human nature receives union with God; third, the nature has received graces through this union. Christ receives the gifts of generation, union, and unction. (*Lawes* V.54.1 II.220.23 )

208. Hooker here quotes Tertullian: 'Pater tota substantia est, Filius vero derivatio totius et propagatio.' Tertull. contra Prax.

209. 'Our God is one, or rather verie *Onenesse*, and meere unitie, having nothing but it selfe in it selfe, and not consisting (as all things do besides God) of many things. In which essentiall unitie of God a Trinitie personall nevertheless subsisteth.' *Lawes* I.2.2. I.59.20



The conjunction of natures 'is no abolishment of naturall properties appertaininge to either substance' but simply the second person of the Trinity subsisting in *human nature*. (*Lawes* V.53.1 II.215.23-24) Jesus' human nature lacks a personal existence alongside of or in addition to the personal subsistence of the second person of the Trinity. Hooker makes it clear that the incarnation is not the union of two persons 'in amitie but of two natures humaine and divine conjoynd in one and the same person.' (*Lawes* V.52.2 II.213.6-8) The personal subsistence constituted in the divine according to the first eternal law *is* the person who exists in *this* human nature:

'The flesh and the conjunction of the flesh with God began both at one instant, his makinge and takinge to him selfe our flesh was but one act, so that in Christ there is no personall subsistence but one, and that from everlastinge. By taking only the nature of man he still continueth one person, and changeth but the maner of his subsistinge, which was before in the meere glorie of the Son of God, and is now in the habit of our flesh.' (*Lawes* V.52.3 II.214.1-8)

The divine and human natures exist together such that the human nature relies radically on the divine person of the Son; the union is asymmetrical.<sup>210</sup> In Christ, the distinguishing characteristics constitutive of a personal subsistence—the defining relations making a person who he or she is—are not those of a human person. The concrete context giving shape to a human life, the overlapping forces of causal laws in nature and society, do not constitute the person possessing the human nature in the case of Jesus of Nazareth. The asymmetry of the incarnation does not render the human nature assumed inconsequential. Instead, the humanity of Christ is part of the one person, the Son of God, who just is this person in

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210. 'Christ is a person both divine and humaine, howbeit not therefore two persons in one, neither both these in one sense, but a person divine, because he is *personallie* the Sonne of God, humane, because *he hath* reallie *the nature* of the children of men.' *Lawes* V.52.3. II.214.27-31 Hooker is here invoking the doctrine of the anhypostasis of Christ's human nature.

eternity. The Word really lives his life in human nature as the subject of birth, baptism, judgment, execution and resurrection<sup>211</sup>:

'And as Christ tooke manhood that by it he might be capable of death whereunto hee humbled him selfe, so because manhood is the proper subject of compassion and feelinge pitie... he which without our nature could not on earth suffer for the synnes of the world, doth now also by meanes thereof both make intercession [and] exercise dominion over all men with a true, a naturall, and a sensible touch of mercie' (*Lawes* V.51.3 II.211.15-23)

In other words, assuming that a person is 'a substance plus accidents,' the incarnation transposes the personal subsistence of the Son—the eternal accident characteristic of the Word—into the substance of human nature as the subject of birth, death, and resurrection.<sup>212</sup>

For this reason, Hooker does not take the incarnation to effect a new general divine immanence to creation. God remains an infinite substance necessarily present to all things. (*Lawes* V.55.4 II.228.30-229.2) The natures of deity and humanity are maintained such that the obscurity of the relationship between God and the world remains even after Christ's earthly life. The operations of human and divine nature are not fundamentally altered or changed in the incarnation: 'whatsoever is naturall to deitie the same remayneth in Christ uncommunicated unto his manhood, and whatsoever naturall to manhood his deitie thereof is

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211. For as much therefore as Christ hath no personall subsistence but one whereby wee acknowledge him to have bene eternallie the Sonne of God, wee must of necessitie applie to the *person* of the Sonne of God even that which is spoken of Christ accordinge to his humane nature. For example, according to the flesh he was borne of the Virgin Marie, baptised of John in the river Jordan, by Pilate adjudged to die, and executed by the Jewes. We cannot saie properly that the Virgin bore, or John did baptize, or Pilat condemn, or the Jewes crucifie the nature of man, because these all are personall attributes; his person is the subject which receaveth them, his nature that which maketh his person capable or apt to receive. *Lawes* V.52.3. II.214.8-19

212. By subject Hooker does *not* mean something with a certain degree of psychological density. He uses subject, more or less, as a synonym for substance, what is 'under' the accidents of individuals. *OED* gives a definition of subject as 'The underlying substance or essence of a thing, as distinguished from its non-essential properties; an individual thing, as opposed to its properties. Freq. contrasted with accident' as possible instead of subject in terms of 'thinker', e.g. Cartesian. Thomas Wilson gives this metaphysical definition in 1590 and it shows up in the Douay Bible commentary in 1609.

uncapable.' (*Lawes* V.53.1 II.216.27-29) As substances, God and humanity maintain their limits, but a new way of subsisting does enter into human life; a new agential law becomes possible. The communication of a new law, a new way of existing at one with God's will, is, after all, the point of the incarnation. The union is instrumental to that task.

### *B. The Work of Christ*

The work of Christ is a complex operation not only dealing with sin, making satisfaction, but also communicating Christ's merit, working repentance, to bring about union with God in the believer. Christ accomplishes his 'bare and naked worke' of human salvation *and* provides for the 'conveyance of this emmynente blessing' to the redeemed preparing to leave 'the world, to be receyved into glory.' (*Justification* 32 V.152.16-22) As was shown at the end of the previous chapter, sin affects human agents in a misdirection of the will effected by an unsound desire and an ineffective social law. The human agent fails to make actual its sensual and intellectual perfection vitiating any chance of spiritual perfection. The incarnation should allow for the reworking of the voluntary human agent at the sensual and intellectual levels in such a way as to make spiritual perfection possible. To effect human salvation Christ must provide a new habitual centre of action *and* the means for its communication to a society of agents in time. The work of salvation can, therefore, be divided into these three categories: satisfaction, conveyance, and union.

*i. Satisfaction*

'*Satisfaction* is a worcke which Justice requireth to be done for contentment of persons injured.'<sup>213</sup> (*Lawes* VI.5.2 III.53.24) The satisfaction of any wrong must, according to Hooker, be at least equal to the injury caused in the wrongdoing. Voluntary agents, however, have procured for themselves an infinite debt by choosing to sin against an eternal and infinite God. As *voluntary* agents, human beings have chosen, truly freely chosen as was shown above, to go against the will of God, and the acts of free wills merit 'rewards and punishments.' (*Lawes* I.9.1 I.94.30) Given the situation created by human sin, human agents, dissenting from the second eternal law, are required to make infinite recompense to God *or* to endure an infinite punishment. Following Anselm quite closely, Hooker explicitly sets up the possibility of making satisfaction for the injury of sin through *either* 'an infinite recompense' *or* 'infinite punishment' *but not both*.<sup>214</sup> The situation requires one or the other: either an atoning act of recompense to God or an infinite punishment by God. God's love and desire to save humanity required that God 'ordeyned in our behalfe a mediator, to doe that which had beene for any other

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213. Hooker's understanding here is clearly Anselmian. See Needlands 'Crime, Guilt, and the Punishment of Christ: Traveling another Way with Anselm of Canterbury and Richard Hooker' *Anglican Theological Review* vol. LXXXIII no. 2 (2006) pp. 197-213 and John MacIntyre *Saint Anselm and his Critics: A Re-interpretation of the Cur Deus Homo* (London: Oliver and Boyd, 1954) p. 127.

214. See Anselm *Cur Deus Homo* I.13 'It is a necessary consequence, therefore, that either the honour which has been taken away should be repaid, or punishment should follow.' *Anselm of Canterbury: The Major Works* eds. Brian Davies and G.R. Evans (Oxford: OUP, 2008) p. 287.

impossible.' (*Lawes* VI.5.2 III.54.5-6) The satisfaction, the perfect act of recompense, was made by Christ in his passion.<sup>215</sup>

The sequence of obedience-death-life in Christ's work replicates within the created realm of the second eternal law the first eternal law of God's life.<sup>216</sup> The pattern constitutive and indicative of the person—the Word, Jesus of Nazareth—by existing in human nature repeats that pattern in the obedience of death and resurrection. The unique personality of the second person is his receptivity from and dependence on the first person, Christ's obedience to the Father. He is, therefore according to Hooker 'three degrees a receyver,' each degree repeating the pattern:

'first, in that he is the Sonne of God; secondlie, in that his humaine nature hath had the honour of union with deitie bestowed upon it; thirdlie, in that by meanes thereof sundrie eminent graces have flowed as effectes from deitie in to that nature which is coupled with it.' (*Lawes* V.LIV.1 II.220.23-27)

The asymmetrical relationship between the Father and the Son, wherein the second person receives the substance of deity from the first person, enables the repetition of properly asymmetrical relationship between Creator and creature to be achieved in Christ's human obedience.

By allowing his personal subsistence to occur in human nature, the second person of the Trinity, Jesus of Nazareth, accomplishes a human act of satisfaction meriting the reward of eternal life. The complex interaction between the givenness of the Son in relation to the Father, the events of Christ's crucifixion and resurrection, and the Son's offering of humanity back to the Father come together in order to establish the righteousness of a life obedient to God and communicable

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215. 'Wherefore all sinne is remitted in the only faith of Christs passion, and noe man without beleefe thereof justified. Faith alone maketh Christs satisfaction ours; howbeit that faith alone which after sinne maketh us by conversion his.' (*Lawes* VI.5.2 III.54.7-10)

216. The phrase 'the sequence obedience-death-life' is from Edwyn Hoskyns *The Fourth Gospel* ed. Francis Noel Davey (London: Faber & Faber, 1947) p. 424.

to human beings as a gift. The Son's relation to the Father finds its analogue in creatures dependence on a creator; the crucifixion and resurrection are a creature's perfect submission to God's will; Jesus' offering of his human nature to the Father in the place of sin clears the space for properly human life.<sup>217</sup> Jesus lives a truly human life because he does so in line with the eternal law of God responsible for the way of the world, a law normally outside human reach but intrinsic to his person. Hooker does not turn away from the merit and reward structure of human action, but follows it through by having Christ act so as to receive the perfect reward due to his meritorious obedience: 'Wherefore taking to him selfe our flesh, and by his incarnation makinge it his own flesh, he had now of his owne although from us what to offer unto God for us.' (*Lawes* V.51.3 II.211.13-15)

Thus Christ's passion can make recompense as an act of perfect obedience. The second person of the Trinity humbled himself initially by taking flesh, he humbled himself even further 'and became accordinge to the flesh obedient so farre as to suffer death, even the death of the crosse, for all men, because such was his fathers will.' (*Lawes* V.55.8 II.232.24-26; see also *Lawes* V.51.3 II.210-211) The personal subsistence of the second person takes on human nature for the purpose of rendering God perfect obedience through choosing to follow the will of the Father to the point of his execution as a human being. The sufferings of the crucifixion, therefore, do not atone *as suffering*; they atone as an act of obedience. Christ is capable of this perfect obedience because of the receptive and, in some sense, subordinate character of his personal subsistence. Constituted in his relationship to the Father, whose will he receives even within the Godhead, the Son

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217. '[God] is for Christs sake contented upon our submission to pardon our rebellion against him; and when that little which his law appointeth is faithfully executed, it pleaseth him in tender compassion and mercie to require noe more. *Lawes* VI.5.3 II.54.24-28

maintains the integrity of his subsistence in the nature of humanity effecting himself as a voluntary agent capable of this obedience.

The incarnation creates the possibility in time of God's saving efficacy among voluntary agents as a voluntary agent. Just as creation comes to being through God's action according to God's eternal law, and this law is the cause of all things, so those called into the fellowship of God eternally are actually made to exist in God's love in the present.

Wee are therefore in God through Christ eternallie accordinge to that intent and purpose whereby wee were chosen to be made his in this present world before the world its selfe was made, wee are in God through the knowledge which is had of us, and the love which is borne towards us from everlastinge. (*Lawes* V.56.7 II.238.18-23)

Christ creates redeemed humanity in time with the power of a divine person through the material of an embodied life.<sup>218</sup> The obedience of the Son on the cross constitutes the knowledge God has of believers, how they sit in the first eternal law, as well as the effective actualisation of that knowledge as the directing force in their lives, how they act in accordance with the second eternal law. With the incarnation, the first eternal law acts on and in the second eternal law to achieve the salvation, the predestination to life, of believers, 'infinitely ancients than the actual work of creation,' as a voluntary act of God. (*DF* 2 IV.102.26-27) The act, like all free acts, is voluntary, for the purpose of salvation, and non-arbitrary, appropriate to the context of sinful humanity, as an act done in accordance with the law of its possessor.<sup>219</sup> In this way, the dynamic character of

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218. Herbert McCabe gives a contemporary account of Christ's work very similar to Hooker's: 'As I see it, we are saved because of the sanctity, the grace, of the man Jesus of Nazareth. I follow Thomas Aquinas in thinking that it is not precisely because Jesus is divine that we are saved but because he was a saint. It was because he was full of grace, a human being who was utterly obedient to the will of the Father, that he earned, merited, our redemption.' Herbert McCabe *God Still Matters* (London: Continuum, 2002) p. 62.

219. The obedience of the second person to the first person of the Trinity is the appropriate means of fulfilling the voluntary purpose God has eternally purposed to keep.

God's engagement with creation in the incarnation retains the asymmetry of the Creator-creature relationship without annulling the specifics of the creaturely context of its accomplishment. Since this salvation will be the proper working of creatures it will be effective as the communication of a new law to voluntary agents.

Thus, Christ's satisfaction becomes effective, leads to repentance, through its appropriation in faith by Christians as the law of a historical community. The 'spirit of adoption' given in Christ's satisfaction on behalf of the believer, 'worketh faith' in the believer who apprehends 'the things which we believe...not only as true, but also good, and that to us.' (*Justification* 26 V.137.4-6) Through Christ's work the voluntary agent, as a still voluntary agent, can begin to desire and to act in accordance with the will of God; the agent follows a right law. Faith thus becomes central for the Christian who lives in Christ without the divine knowledge possessed by Christ: 'Faith alone maketh Christs satisfaction ours; howbeit that faith alone which after sinne, maketh us by conversion his.' (Lawes VI.5.2 III.54.8-10) Now, I turn to the conveyance of that faith.

## *ii. Conveyance*

So, for Hooker, the formative work of Christ occurs

'because [Christ] is in us as a movinge and workinge cause, from which manie blessed effects are reallie found to ensue, and that in sundrie both kindes and degrees all tendinge to eternall happiness.' (Lawes V.56.10 II.242.8-11)

Christ is a cause at work in the Christian life leading to the final end of eternal happiness. The contingent nature of the life Christ lived on earth accounts for the character of his body, the church, still active in the world. Since Jesus, God and



man, causes the existence of the church in the world, redemption is similar as an act to creation *but* differs in range as an act within creation itself.

'To all things he is life, and to men light *as the Sonne of God*; to the Church both life and light eternall by beinge made the Sonne of man for us, and by beinge in us a savior whether wee respect him as God or as man.' (*Lawes* V.56.7 II.239.31-240.3)

The society of the church is the place where the work of Christ effects salvation. Salvation, the human negotiation of creation in accordance with the first eternal law, centres on the merit of Jesus of Nazareth as its source. While Christ's work may be conceptualised in diverse ways, all of these descriptions will point back to what Jesus has accomplished.<sup>220</sup>

The entrance of human beings into loving fellowship with God is not a hidden occurrence for Hooker but one that happens openly and visibly in the realm of human relations by means of human relations. The human community brought about through Christ's redemptive work in the world, the church, structures itself around the gospel announced in Christ's incarnation: it will follow the form of the human life radically dependent upon God lived out in crucifixion and resurrection.<sup>221</sup> The new way of relating to God, as opposed to the previous sinful way of relating, follows the form of the previous process of human law creation with a new habitual centre in place. The communication of the new habitual centre is the justification of the believer through the imputation of Christ's righteousness. The necessary particulars of this justification were handled in the previous chapter so I will not treat them in depth here. Hooker's basic scheme is that: 'That

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220. 'Salvation only by Christe is the true foundation whereupon indeed Christianitie standeth... There may be an additament of explication, which overthroweth not, but proveth and concludeth the proposition whereunto it is annexed.' *Justification* 29 V.149.20-27

221. 'His bodie crucified and his blood shed for the life of the world, are the true elementes of that heavenlie beinge, which maketh us such as him selfe is of whom we com.' *Lawes* V.56.7 II.239.24-26.

[righteousness] whereby here we are justified is perfecte, but not inherente, that whereby we are sanctified, inherent, but not perfecte.' (*Justification* 3 V.109.9-11) Christ is, of course, the source of this perfect righteousness that continues to effect an inherent, but imperfect, righteousness in its recipient.

Justification or imputation does not occur in an ineffective communication of information but in the actual, historical, and material work of a life lived in a lawful human society. As has been previously shown, a key textual motif for Hooker at this point is the letter to the Galatians, especially the argument that Christian believers are set free from the imposition of an arbitrary law *as necessary for salvation* in light of the creative and causative indwelling of Christ. Per Deborah Shuger, the vertical relationship with God comes with certain horizontal relationships within the church: 'in the *Lawes*, ritual acts do not 'declare' (i.e., signify) *gemeinschaft* but create it...As in...Holy Communion, egalitarian community forms at the sites of transcendence.'<sup>222</sup> At the moment of determination by Christ popular and elite piety elide into each other through their common source in Jesus Christ.<sup>223</sup> Whereas contact with God in creation had led to sinful society—an unloving community formed at this site of transcendence—through the distorted advance of human living from the sensual appetite through misguided to a malformed will, now a new habitual centre begins to properly move from sense through reason to the will in righteous acts.

Union with Christ involves the humanity of Christ constraining the shape of the Christian life. Hooker's explanation of how Christ can be a moving and working cause in the individual does not initially make use of either material or mental causality, but begins its work in the soul. The cause, Christ, is in the

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222. Debora Shuger "*Societie Supernaturall* pp.322-323.

223. Shuger "*Societie Supernaturall* p. 323.

Christian 'not carnally nor corporally inhabitinge, but dwelling in the soule of man as a thinge.' (*Justification* 26 V.137.27-29) Hooker names this process, this ritual creation of ghostly fellowship, in his accounts of the sacraments, baptism and eucharist, and the reading of Scripture.

I will now turn to those accounts to show the recalibration of sensual appetite in the sacraments and reason in the reading of Scripture.

## *II. Ecclesial Life*

Hooker's description of the working out of human salvation through the work of Christ makes use of a basic interpretive principle given in book three of the *Lawes* in reference to Scriptural interpretation: 'the same Apostle [Paul] teacheth, namely, that nature hath need of grace, whereunto I hope we are not opposite, by holding that grace hath use of nature.' (*Lawes* III.8.6 I.223.27-29) Citing 1 Corinthians 2.14, Hooker reverses the fact that in order to know certain things in a saving way human agents must receive God's grace in order to say that grace, as a gift *to* human agents, works according to the ways of its recipient, naturally. Parallel to the continued distinction of natures in the person of Christ, the salvation of human beings does not do away with their humanity, but, instead, completes their humanity without doing violence to the particularities of the law of their being. Human beings, in the course of their communal life, naturally desire union with God:

'[We are] happie therfore when fully we injoy God, as an object wherein the powers of our soules are satisfied even with everlasting delight; so that although we be men, yet by being unto God united we live as it were the life of God.' (*Lawes* I.11.2 I.112.17-19)

All human beings, possessing this desire for enjoyment of and union with God, are, as human beings, capable of potentially experiencing this union, '*as it were*'.<sup>224</sup> Justification, imputation, and sanctification, therefore, affect the human agent at all three levels of his or her life (appetite, reason, and will) to bring about this salvation.<sup>225</sup> The new community of the church begins to reverse the misfiring of these aspects of human life in order to bring about voluntary agents capable of good actions. It works, more or less, as other communities do by forming agents in light of the causality of the second eternal law, except now exerted in the person of Jesus Christ.

#### A. Sacraments

The sacraments are not, for Hooker,

'bare *resemblances* or memorialls of thinges absent' or '*naked signes* and testimonies' of previous grace, but 'meanes effectual' for the actual deliverance of grace, 'which grace the sacramentes represent or signifie.' (*Lawes* V.57.5 II.247.17-20)<sup>226</sup>

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224. 'Now if men had not naturally this desire to be happie, how were it possible that all men shoulde have it? All men have. Therefore this desire in man is naturall. It is not in our power not to do the same; how should it then be in our power to doe it coldly or remisly? So that our desire being naturall is also in that degree of earnestnes whereunto nothing can be added. And is it probable that God should frame the hartes of all men so desirous of that which no man may obtaine? It is an axiome of nature that naturall desire cannot utterly be frustrate.' (*Lawes* I.11.4 I.114.8-17)

225. Complete union with him must be according unto every power and facultie of our minds apt to receave so glorious an object. Capable we are of God both by understanding and will: by understanding, as hee is that soveraigne truth which comprehendeth the rich treasures of all wisdom; by will, as He is that sea of goodnes whereof whoso tasteth shall thirst no more. As the will doth now worke upon that object by desire, which is as it were a motion towards the end as yet unobtained; so likewise upon the same hereafter received it shall work also by love. *Appetitus inhiantis fit amor fruentis*, saith St. Augustine. *The longing disposition of them that thirst is changed into the sweete affection of them that tast and are replenished.* (*Lawes* I.XI.3 I.113.9-17)

226. Loyer describes Hooker's position: 'Selon l'augustinisme, le signe et la chose, sacramentum et res, sont à la fois liés et distincts. Le sacrement est donc le signe d'une réalité présente, non le signe d'une chose absente. Et cette réalité est objective.' *L'Anglicanisme* 520.

As shown above, the human will comes to be through the interaction of the sensible appetite and the use of reason or discourse. Although the brevity and occasional obscurity of Hooker's writing on these sacraments leaves much to be desired, it is possible to see in his treatment of baptism and eucharist an account of human transformation through sensible goodness and human discourse.<sup>227</sup> They both give an object of desire to the human appetite, Jesus Christ, as well as provide those concepts, framing categories, necessary for a right approach to that object by means of the practices of those rituals. Before looking at the specific aspects of these sacraments, I will now look at how Christ is present in them and their historical source in him.<sup>228</sup>

Although something new has been made possible through the incarnate work of Jesus, Hooker does not view this change as an alteration of the eternal-temporal and infinite-finite structure of the relationship between God and creation. The division of natures in the earthly incarnation, despite their occasional cooperation, is maintained even when Christ is ascended, and salvation does not represent the overcoming of this division.<sup>229</sup> Everything can be divided, according to Hooker, 'into finite and infinite, that no one substance, nature, or qualitie, can be possiblie capable of both.' (*Lawes* V.55.2 II.227.33-228.2) All created things are limited, 'stinted', and this limitation of their substance 'is both the perfection and also the preservation thereof.' (*Lawes* V.55.2 II.228.3-7) This 'measure' gives

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227. On the problems stemming from the brevity of Hooker's treatments of the sacraments see Miller p. 140.

228. Hooker himself treats the question of Christ's presence as a necessary prelude to an accurate account of the sacraments. 'wee are briefly to consider how Christ is present, to the ende it may thereby better appeare howe wee are made partakers of Christ both otherwise and in the sacramentes themselves. (*Lawes* V.55.1. II.227.30-33)

229. Lett us therefore sett it down for a rule or principle so necessarie as nothinge more to the plaine decidinge of all doubttes and questions about the union of natures in Christ, that of both natures there is a *cooperation* often, an *association* always, but never any mutual *participation*, whereby the properties of the one are infused into the other. (*Lawes* V.53.3. II.218.28-219.3)

character and shape to created things, allows them to be *this* or *that* for *this* or *that* purpose, without in anyway being an imperfection, something to be overcome in salvation. The substance of God, however, is infinite. According to his nature, God is present

'because his substance is immateriall, pure, and of us in this world so incomprehensible, that albeit no parte of us be ever absent from him who is present whole unto everie particular thing, yeat his presence with us wee no way discerne farther than only that God is present...' (*Lawes* V.55.3 II.228.25-29)

God is uniquely and immaterially present to all things *as infinite and uncreated*. Sacramental presence, 'the sequele of an infinite and incomprehensible substance,' (*Lawes* V.55.4 II.228.31-229.1) comes about as a natural property of Christ's deity rather than an expansion of his human nature, which would in the process undo the 'measure' of that nature. Those attributes basic to his human nature, his soul and his body, cannot be and are not universally present.

'Wherefore Christ is essentiallie present with all thinges, in that he is verie God, but not present with all thinges as man, because manhood and the partes thereof can neither be the cause nor the true subject of such presence.' (*Lawes* V.55.4 II.229.20-23)<sup>230</sup>

Nevertheless, Christ is present *personally*. The person of Christ, existing in two complete natures, God and creature, is present to all things in his divine nature, that is nevertheless always united to his human nature. This presence of the human nature united to the divine nature in the person is 'preasence *by waie of conjunction* [and] is in some sorte presence.' (*Lawes* V.55.7 II.232.7-8) Personal presence of

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230. See also: 'The substance of the bodie of Christ hath no presence, neither can have, but onlie locall. It was not therefore everie where seene, nor did it everie where suffer death, everie where it could not be intombed, it is not everie where now beinge exalted into heaven. There is no prooffe in the world stronge enough to inforce that Christ had a true bodie but by the true and naturall properties of his body. Amongst which properties, definite or locall presence is chief.' (*Lawes* V.55.6 II.230.29-231.1) That which excludeth him therefore as man from so greate largenes of presence, is only his beinge *man*, a creature *of this particular kinde*, whereunto the God of nature hath sett those boundes of restraint and limitation, beyonde which to attribute unto it anie thing more then a creature *of that sorte* can admit, were to give it another nature, to make it a creature of some other kinde then in truth it is. (*Lawes* V.55.5 II.230.7-13)

this kind allows Christ, without transgressing the limits of a human body, to convey the obedience made available to him personally in his incarnation to others:

'there is no stint which can be sett to the value or merite of the sacrificed bodie of Christ, it hath no measured certaintie of limites, bounds of efficacie unto life it knoweth none, but is also it selfe infinite in *possibilitie of application*.' (*Lawes* V.55.9 II.234.17-20)<sup>231</sup>

Making use of his Anselmian account of atonement, Hooker makes the infinite merit of Christ's human obedience what he communicates through his infinite divine presence. Whereas before God's presence failed to effect its cause, salvation, now, through this humanly achieved obedience, the causal relationship can lead to salvation. This presence in the sacraments mirrors the earlier divine presence leading to human appetite and desire.

At the same time, the framing categories or conceits constituting the Christian community come from Jesus of Nazareth. Sacraments, generally, are 'a perpetuall dutie in religion,' and a Christian sacrament one that is 'proper to Christian Religion.' (*DF* 14 IV.115.13-14) The general religious practice of sacraments—keeping in mind that only Christian sacraments are true sacraments—is made an inherent part of Christian piety because 'Christ be the author thereof.' (*DF* 14 IV.115.15) Jesus Christ institutes the sacraments of baptism and eucharist for the specific purpose of bringing about grace in the receiver of those sacraments according to divine promise. His institution of these particular sacraments is in accordance with the earlier institution of Jewish religious rites for specific purposes that have now passed away.<sup>232</sup> They were given at various times and in various

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231. 'Par voie d'efficacité: il n'y a point de limite aux mérites du corps sacrifié du Christ.' Olivier Loyer *L'Anglicanisme* 484.

232. See the discussion of the mutability of divinely established laws at *Lawes* III.10.1-3 I.239-242, especially 'Whether God bee the author of lawes by authorizing that power of men whereby they are made, or by delivering them made immediately from him selfe, by word onely, or in writing also, or howsoever; notwithstanding the authoritie of their maker, the mutabilitie of that end for which they are made doth also make them chaungeable.' (*Lawes* III.10.2 I.240.27-32).

forms in order to make Israel holy within the specific situation it found itself in. The sacraments were given in a specific context in order to accomplish a specific purpose and so exhibit the voluntary and non-arbitrary character of a law. They are given by Christ as 'the powerfull instrumentes of God to eternall life' for use 'only in this life.' (*Lawes* V.50.3 II.208.17-20)<sup>233</sup> The source of this eternal life being, of course, 'the death of our Saviour Christ, to us the fountaine of all grace.' (*DF* 14 V.115.19-20) They work appropriately, non-arbitrarily, when they effectively communicate this death.

'Grace intended by sacramentes was a cause of the choice, and is a reason of the fitness of the [outward] elements them selves... it was of necessitie that wordes of expresse declaration taken from the verie mouth of our Lord him selfe should be added unto visible elementes, that the one might infallible teach what the other doe most assuredlie bring to passe.' (*Lawes* V.58.1 II.248.23-31)

Christ is responsible, then, for the three elements making up the Christian sacraments: the grace given in it, the appropriate material element of the sacrament, and the conceit expressing the work of the sacrament.<sup>234</sup> Christian sacraments, when properly celebrated, affect, therefore, the habitual centre of a voluntary agent through grace, the sensual appetite of the agent through material elements, and the reason of the agent through discourse. The celebration of the sacraments allows the voluntary agent following Christ to execute an act of judgment as whole person according to the first eternal law manifested in Christ's life. The execution of this law, as a law, will continue to be voluntary and non-arbitrary as various Christians approximate it by repeating it.

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233. See also: Sacramentes serve as... morall instrumentes, the use whereof is in our handes, the effect in [God's]; for the use wee have his express commandment, for the effect his conditionall promisee: so that without our obedience to the one, there is of the other no apparent assurance, as contrariwise where the signes and sacramentes of his grace are not either through contempt unreceyved, or receyved with contempt, wee are not to doubt but that they reallie give what they promise, and are what they signifie. *Lawes* V.57.5 II.247.8-16

234. *Lawes* V.58.2. II.248-250



*i. Baptism*

As an act of the human society of the church, baptism is the moment when those chosen by God in eternity come to have God in them as a directing force.<sup>235</sup> The previously established causal relationship between the first eternal law, the law of God's own being, and the second eternal law, the law of creation, changes such that the voluntary agent begins to act in accord with the first eternal law. The potential relationship between God and creation becomes actual in baptism as an entrance into a particular community:

'Predestination bringeth not to life, without the grace of externall vocation, wherein our baptisme is implied. For as wee are not naturallie men without birth, so neither are wee Christian men in the ey of the Church of God but by new birth, nor accordinge to the manifest ordinarie course of divine dispensation new borne, but by that baptisme which both declareth and maketh us Christians.' (*Lawes* V.60.3 II.256.16-22)<sup>236</sup>

This actualisation of eternal predestination is not, for Hooker, a virtual pronouncement but a real change in the recipient of the sacrament.

Baptism effects a real change in its recipient according to two paradigms already established in Hooker's thought.

First, the justification paradigm of imputed perfect righteousness leading to actual imperfect righteousness: "That [righteousness] whereby here we are justefied is perfecte, but not inherente, that whereby we are sanctified, inherent, but not perfecte.' (*Justification* 3 V.109.9-11) Baptism does not work instantaneously on the Christian believer, but, instead is the 'inchoation of those graces' in one who is a 'first beginner.' (*Lawes* V.57.6 II.248.2-5) The inchoate grace given in baptism,

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235. *Lawes* V.55.7 II.231-232

236. See also Wee are therefore in God through Christ eternallie accordinge to that intent and purpose whereby wee were chosen to be made his in this present world before the world its elfe was made, wee are in God through the knowledge which is had of us, and the love which is borne towards us from everlastinge. (*Lawes* V.56.7 II.238.18-23)

like the sensitive appetite, passes into the reason as a formative factor in the development of the habitual tendencies of the voluntary agent. Whereas before sin had influenced the appetite, now sin has been washed away allowing the agent to act in a way appropriate to his or her intentions and context through an imputation of the righteousness achieved by Christ.<sup>237</sup> The sort of obedience Christ was capable of throughout his life becomes possible to a degree for the Christian under the influence of this imputed righteousness. Under the influence of sin, as shown in the previous chapter, human agents can choose to act against their own intentions and understanding to choose a lesser good when sensible goodness compels the appetite to override reason in a domination of the will. Christ's obedience to the will of God as the endurance pain, suffering, and death in order to bring about the salvation of the world reverses this compulsion. Christ's voluntary intention to save the world took the appropriate form of an obedient death instrumental to God's own intention.<sup>238</sup> Christ was able to override his normal, and actually felt, desire to continue in his bodily life, which Hooker names as one of the most basic human attributes, in order to accomplish the will of God.<sup>239</sup> The gift of unction to the receptive human nature of Christ elevated his knowledge to an awareness of the divine plan, 'though not with infinite knowledg peculiar to deitie it selfe', instilling his reason with the fortitude to maintain his will to the point of death. (*Lawes*

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237. '[B]aptisme is a sacrament which God hath instituted in his Church, to the ende that they which receave the same might thereby be incorporated into Christ, and so through his most pretious merit obtaine as well that savinge grace of imputation which taketh away all former guiltines, as also that infused divine vertue of the holie Ghost, which giveth to the powers of the soule their first disposition towards future newnes of life. *Lawes* V.60.2 II.255.6-11

238. The death of Christ in it selfe therefore God willeth not, which yeat to the ende we might thereby obtaine life he both alloweth and appointeth. In like manner the Sonne of man indureth willinglie to that purpose those grevous paines, which simplie not to have shunned had bene against nature, and by consequent against God. V.48.10 II.198.17-22

239. Whereas therefore wee finde in God a will resolved that Christ shall suffer; and in the humane will of Christ two actuall desires, the one avoyding, and the other acceptinge death; is that desire which first declareth it selfe by prayer against that wherewith he concludeth prayer, or either of them against his minde to whom prayer in this case seeketh? *Lawes* V.48.10 II.197.18-24

V.54.7 II.225.12) Baptism replicates this process by imputing not simply the righteousness but the 'infused divine vertue of the holie Ghost, which giveth to the powers of the soule theire first disposition towards future newnes of life. (*Lawes* V.60.2 II.255.11-13) The asymmetrical dependence of the creature on the creator becomes obedience through the 'necessary inward cause' of the Spirit.' (*Lawes* V.LIX.3)

Second, God works human salvation out through regular human means: 'grace hath use of nature.' (*Lawes* III.8.6 I.223.29) As an action commanded by God in Christ, the baptising of believers is itself a moral act done in obedience to God's will. Obedience to God's will is a basic characteristic of the church as the human society formed according to the person and work of Christ, who is receptive obedience. The obedience to Christ's command to baptise, then, is the properly ecclesiastical, i.e. in accordance with established ecclesial laws, element of the sacrament. Adhering to these two outward elements of the sacrament in the act of baptising necessarily leads to the third most important element of sacrament: its mystical character.<sup>240</sup>

'[The] *secret* reference which this action hath to life and remission of synnes by vertue of Christes own compact solemnely made with his Church, to accomplish fullie the sacrament of baptism, there is not any thinge more required.' (*Lawes* V.62.15 II.281.25-28)

Baptism, then, accords with the human intention of Christ in instituting the sacrament as well as the society, the church, that continues to follow this intention in various places. By learning the wisdom of the community, the baptised are schooled in the wisdom of the society and rely on it for its conceits. Voluntary agents become Christian agents by learning to respond to sensual stimuli through

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240. *Lawes* V.62.15 II.280-282

the medium of the church's discourse so as to act in agreement with the same canon framing Christ's own actions, to act reasonably as he acted.

*ii. Eucharist*

The inchoate graces of baptism come to fruition in the eucharist.<sup>241</sup> Hooker assumes that all Christians will understand the eucharist as a 'reall participation of Christ,' the person of Christ communicating in this participation

'his holie spirit to sanctifie them as it sanctifieth him,' the force and virtue of the eucharist to be derivative of '*sacrificed bodie and blood*,' and '*the effect thereof... is a real transmutation of our soules and boodies from sinne to righteousness*.' (Lawes V.67.7 II.335.33-336.8)

A real participation in Christ's sacrificed body and blood communicates his obedient life enabling the Holy Spirit to work in the recipient, as in Christ, an obedience to God. While Hooker clearly had the tools to develop a larger metaphysical or cosmological account of the mechanism whereby Christ is present in the eucharist, he, instead, places it in the human life as something that can be known by its effects. Knowledge from effects is not necessarily as full as knowledge of causes but does give an acquaintance of a sort with the cause.

Christ's active presence in the eucharist, unlike the presence in baptism, involves the use by the voluntary agent of the church's conceits, its framing discourse, to bring about this real change in the receiver.<sup>242</sup> The bread and cup of the eucharist are 'causes instrumentall' for the participation of the receptive believer

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241. Wee receive Christ Jesus in baptisme once as the first beginner, in the eucharist often as being by continewall degrees the finisher of our life. *Lawes* V.57.6. II.248.4-6

242. Hooker's receptionist eucharistic theology does *not* deny the real presence of Christ in the elements. It is, however, agnostic about the overarching theory for this presence. On this point see: W.R. Crockett *Eucharist: Symbol of Transformation*, (New York: Pueblo, 1989) p. 190, H.R. Mcadoo and Kenneth Stevenson *What Happens at Holy Communion? The Mystery of the Eucharist in the Anglican Tradition*, (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 1997) 28.

in Christ's body and blood. (*Lawes* V.67.5 II.334.18) The acknowledgement of the causal presence of Christ's body and blood in the bread and cup by the believer comes about through a degree of moral renovation. While faith is 'an intellectuall habit of the minde, and [has] hir seate in the understandinge,' an evil orientation, 'the streame of corrupt affection,' can prevent the mind from seeing what God reveals to the believer. (*Lawes* V.63.2 II.291.20-27) Proper reception of the eucharist requires this alteration in affection *and* a change in understanding. This change is not the acquisition of a large speculative apparatus but the presence of something eliciting motion and delight in the receiver.<sup>243</sup> In a mirror image of the way in which original sin was transmitted through corrupt discourse of worldly societies, the discourse of the church in the intensity of its ritual communicates something capable of eliciting an affective response that dominates the understanding: '[t]he minde therefore feelinge present joy is allwaies mervelous unwilling to admitt anie other cogitation.' (*Lawes* V.67.3 II.332.23-24) The eucharistic ritual of the church requires this interpretive activity for its reception in imitation of the initial interpretive activity of Christ who instituted the sacrament. In the place of the Passover ritual, Christ consecrates the bread and wine for the purpose of communicating his coming sacrifice to subsequent generations of Christian believers. The disciples, although they

'understood not perfectlie to what effect or issue the same would come,' knowing, without possessing a clear knowledge of *why*, that the body and blood of Christ lead to eternal life, received the bread and wine *as his body and blood* by his command and promise. (*Lawes* V.67.4 II.333.19-20)

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243. Curious and intricate speculations doe hinder, they abate, they quench such inflamed motions of delight and joy as divine graces use to raise when extraordinarily they are present. The minde therefore feelinge present joy is allwaies mervellous unwilling to admitt anie other cogitation, and in that case casteth off those disputes whereunto the intellectual parte at other times easily draweth. *Lawes* V.67.3 II.332.20-26

Christ interprets and reframes bread and wine as his body and in so doing constitutes a definitive concept for the church going forward. Those who apply these concepts to the bread and wine for the same purpose of conveying participation in Christ's body and blood, 'doinge what was required and beleivinge what was promised,' are affected by the same effect as the disciples. (*Lawes* V.67.4 II.334.2-3)<sup>244</sup>

The effect of the eucharist is clear: 'soules and boodies quickned to eternall life are effectes the cause whereof is the person of Christ, his bodie and his bloode are the true wellspringe out of which this life floweth.' (*Lawes* V.67.5 II.334.22-25) Causal influence of the soul in the eucharist is similar to Hooker's explanation of causality in justification. God can be an inward working cause in the individual without making use of either material or mental causality, but working in the soul. The soul can be the site of this change in the human person as what organises the body and gives 'substance quantitie and shape' to its members. (*Lawes* V.58.1 II.248.20) The cause, Christ, is in the Christian 'not carnally or corporally inhabiting, but dwelling in the soul of man.' By dwelling in and working on the soul, Christ reshapes the whole person as a voluntary agent in his or her appetite, reason, and will. Even when the saving truth does come into the believer's mental awareness, God must be acting to make it effective:

'As the lighte of nature doth cawse the mind to apprehend those truthes which are meereley reationall so that saving truth which is far above the reache of humayne reason cannott otherwise then by the spirite of the almighty be conceyved.' (*Justification* 26 V.137.31-138.4)

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244. Our imitation of him consisteth not in tyinge scrupulouslie ourselves unto his syllables, but rather in speakinge by the heavenlie direction of that inspired divine wisdom which teacheth divers waies to one ende, and doth therein controle their boldnes by whome any profitable way is censured as reprobable only under coulor of some small difference from greates examples going before. To doe throughout every the like circumstance the same which Christ did in this action were by following his footsteps in that sort to erre more from the purpose hee aimed at than we now do by not following them with so nice and severe strictnesse. (*Lawes* V.68.2. II.345.18-346.3)

The soul, then, rather than the understanding as such, is the point of contact where the crucified Christ becomes present to the believer. When Hooker refers repeatedly to the body and blood of Christ, he is invoking a general presence of Jesus' body to the believer, but specifically the body of Christ as the obedient sacrifice: the meritorious man now indwelling the believer, 'a kind of transubstantiation in us.' (*Lawes* V.67.11 II.339.7-8) The virtue and efficacy of the sacrament depends on whatsoever grace '*there is in his sacrificed bodie and blood.*' (*Lawes* V.67.7 II.336.5-6) The interpretive concept framing the eucharist is the sacrificed body and blood of Jesus on the cross, not any speculative or philosophical *theory* of presence, such that when applied to the bread and cup these concepts, unlike those framed by sinful societies, allow for the crucified Christ to be present as a forceful and dominating object of delight, like those physical pleasures capable of short-circuiting reason in voluntary agents, restoring voluntary agents to their place in the interaction of the eternal laws. The use of these concepts begins with the simplicity of faith rather than the travails of the understanding that can make warm affection run cold. Hooker himself sums up his position at the end of his treatise on the eucharist:

Let it therefore be sufficient for me presenting my selfe at the Lodes table to know what there I receive from him, without searchinge or inquiringe of the maner of how Christ performeth his promise; let disputes and questions, enimies to pietie, abatementes of true devotion and hitherto in this cause but over patientlie heard, let them take their rest; let curious and sharp witted men beat their heades about what questions them selves will, the verie letter of the worde of Christ giveth plaine securitie that these mysteries doe as nailes fasten us to his verie cross, that by them wee draw out, as touching efficacie force and vertue, even the blood of his goared side, in the woundes of our redemer wee there dip our tongues, wee are died redd both within and without, our hunger is satisfied and our thirst for ever quenched, they are thinges wonderfull which he feeleth, greates which hee seeth and unhard of which he uttereth whose soule is possest of this pascall lamb and made joyfull in the strength of this new eie, this bread hath in it more then the substance which our eyes behold, this cup hallowed with sollemne benediction availeth to the endles life and wellfare both of our soule and bodie, in that it serveth as well for a medicine to heale our infirmities and purge our sinnes as for a sacrifice of thanksgiving, with

touching it sanctifieth, it enligneth with believe, it trulie conformeth us unto the image of Jesus Christ; what these elements are in them selves it skilleth not, it is enough that to me which take them they are the bodie and blood of Christ, his promise in witnes hereof sufficeth, his word be knoweth which way to accomplish, why should any cogitation possesse the minde of a faithfull communicant but this. *O my God thou art true, O my soule thou art happie?*' (Lawes V.67.12 II.342.31-343.26)

In the eucharist, for Hooker, things are *felt* that banish any cogitation other than the body and blood of Christ and this is what satisfies Christian desires. While Hooker's doctrine of the eucharist does other things, his teaching shows how in the sacrament the appetite and reason of a voluntary agent function properly in line with the eternal laws. What the voluntary agent desires in the appetite is known and found by the reason in taking the body and blood of Christ. The natural desire for God finds a level of satiety in bread and cup. The voluntary agent, though, still has to act non-arbitrarily in its context and to do so reasonably. The imputation of perfect righteousness must manifest itself in inherent imperfect righteousness. I now turn to Scripture to see this process at work.

### *iii. Scripture*

If in the sacraments of the church, baptism and eucharist, God exerts a causal influence as an inward working cause, then in the reading of the Scriptures the habitual centre reconstituted through that causal influence manifests in redeemed, though imperfect, abstractive reasoning. The appetite changed through the imputation of Christ's righteousness, 'perfect, but not inherent,' effects a transformed reason directing a sanctified will, 'inherent, but not perfect,' in accordance with God's eternal laws. (*Justification* 3 V.109.9-11) This reconstituted operation of reason coming before the sanctified operation of the will can be seen



in how individuals learn to read Scripture alone and in the community of the church. No longer clouded in the same way, or the same degree, reason can learn to see the second eternal law in creation and in Scripture in order to direct the will. The 'doctrinal instrument' of Scripture serves a means of educating the reason and the will such that in whatever situation an agent must act in, it will be able to act as a free agent: voluntarily and non-arbitrarily. Scripture has this function, for Hooker, because it enables those who hear it or read it—even if only in public worship—to be acquainted with the cause and end of the created world, God, and to learn those laws, natural and supernatural, appropriate to human beings as voluntary agents. God communicates these matters to believers in Scripture through his Word, Jesus Christ, who unites the first and second eternal laws in his person and is, therefore, the subject of Scripture:

'These wordes ['the folishness of preaching'] declare how admerable force those mysteries have which the world doth deride as follies; they shoue that the *foolishness of the crosse of Christ* is the *wisdome of true believers*; they concerne the *object* of our faith, *the matter preached of* and believed in by Christian men ['the cross of Christ']. (Lawes V.22.9 II.96.9-14)

Scripture's operation, in Hooker's terms, can be seen, then, in the Christian apprehension of Christ and in the Christian assent to the laws in it.<sup>245</sup>

## *B. A Full Christian Fact*

### *i. Apprehension*

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245. L'Ecriture est suffisante parce qu'elle est parfaite; mais elle est parafite parce qu'elle réalise sa fin propre; or, cette fin propre, c'est le message évangélique du salut. Saint Thomas et Luther s'accordent donc chez Hooker: en définitive l'objet irréductible de la foi, le noyau spécifiquement surnaturel de l'Ecriture, qui est comme le centre de toute une constellation de vérités naturelles, c'est le Christ sauveur. Olivier Loyer *L'Anglicanisme* 133

As was shown at the end of the last chapter, sin, as Hooker sees it, comes about as human agents fail to recognise properly the principle of creation, God, on account of their misdirected appetite and reason. They fail to actualise their sensual and intellectual perfections, which make it impossible to actualise their spiritual perfection. The lewd and wicked customs of societies prevent human agents from being reasonable, and this reason proves incapable of reaching the infinite good that God is. As this chapter has maintained, the sacraments of the church, however, begin to recalibrate the appetite and the reason through sensual acquaintance with God. As important as this acquaintance is, it does not bring about the satiation of the rational desire for an infinite and unsensible goodness. What is needed for the satisfaction of the desired perfections of human nature is some knowledge of the end of creation, God, who has been unknown apart from Christ. This non-instrumental knowledge of God, the good news of his self-communication in Jesus Christ, is the Gospel witnessed to by Scripture.<sup>246</sup>

As W. Speed Hill has pointed out, the Apostles knew God through revelation, that is through the most assured and desirable form of knowledge, 'by plaine aspect and intuitive beholding,' but the best that can *now* be hoped for is truth known through 'strong and invincible demonstration' while most will need to settle for the 'way greatest probability leadeth.' (*Lawes* II.VII.5 I.179.11-17)<sup>247</sup> Apprehension of God through the Scripture, then, follows the basic pattern of learning the conceits of a community, worked out through a long process of

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246. 'Il ne suffit pas d'affirmer que l'objet de la foi se définit comme ce qui par essence ne peut être atteint par la raison; c'est rester sur le plan de la forme du témoignage, sans aller à son contenu. L'objet propre de la foi, c'est l'Evangile du Salut; non pas le texte évangélique, mais la Bonne Nouvelle, la Promesse que nous sommes sauvés par le Christ et dans le Christ.' Olivier Loyer *L'Anglicanisme* p. 397

247. W. Speed Hill 'Scripture as Text, Text as Scripture: The Case of Richard Hooker.' *TEXT: Transactions for the Society of Textual Scholarship* vol. 9 (1996) p. 96.

discernment, in order to turn to the cause of that knowledge. Probability encoded in the received tradition can be overturned by clear reasoning; clear reasoning overruled by intuitive knowledge of a cause. Scripture, for Hooker, does not stand above this process of acquiring, transmitting, and criticising the conceits of communal knowledge. Like Moses, the Prophets, and Christ himself, the Apostles witness to 'Gods truth' (*Lawes* V.19.1 II.67.15-16) by giving testimony and setting down a relation of what God had revealed to them, their intuitive knowledge. Apostolic writing and preaching, as language and speech, conveys the revelations made to the Apostles to those who read and hear those writings 'without addition or diminution, which scripture hath derived from the holie Ghost.' (*Lawes* V.22.6 II.92.10-11) Subsequent Christians acquire these very same conceits *not* through a special revelation, i.e. intuitive knowledge, but through the normal processes of coming to an understanding of a new conceit.

The process of the communication of revelation, of the knowledge of God in the crucified Christ, follows the justification-sanctification structure of an initial supernatural imputation that causes a change in the natural character of its recipient such that he or she begins to approximate to the initial imputation. Supernatural grace 'hath use of nature.' (*Lawes* III.8.6 I.223.29) As shown in the last chapter, owing to the effects of sin, human agents lack knowledge of God. It is simply not historically available to them in their situation. A supernatural way is appropriate to the given situation of humanity, 'a course which groundeth it selfe upon the guiltines of sinne, and through sinne desert of condemnation and death,' grounded in the historical, but eternally chosen, work of Jesus Christ. (*Lawes* I.XI.6 I.118.16-18) As one sent by God for his specific work, Jesus of Nazareth, in his specific historical density, is the ground of a salutary understanding of God. The object of

the apostolic preaching, the cause to be grasped by means of the church's conceits, is, therefore, Christ crucified. 'That which must save beleivers is *the knowledg of the crosse of Christ, the onlie subject of all our preaching.*' (*Lawes* V.22.9 II.96.7-8) This intuitive apostolic knowledge, as knowledge corrective of an earlier misunderstanding, is demonstrated in the interpretive amendment of the Old Testament by the writers of the New Testament, by '[going] from the books of scripture to the sense and meaning thereof.' (*Lawes* III.8.16 I.233.9-10)<sup>248</sup> Hooker documents this movement to sense and meaning in the reinterpretation of the Old Testament by the Apostles in their preaching. Peter, in Acts 2.31, and Paul, in Acts 13.35-36, interpret Psalm 16, written, so Hooker thinks, by David about himself to be about Christ.<sup>249</sup> Apart from Christ natural reason would interpret these passages to be about David, but Peter and Paul, enjoying an intuitive grasp of revelation, can interpret these passages to be about Christ. The new interpretation offered by Peter and Paul, however, will be communicated to Christians by the normal means of discourse with its trial and error: 'But as everie thinge of price, so this doth require travaile. We bringe not the knowledg of God with us into the world.' (*Lawes* V.21.3 II.85.24-26) Knowledge of God has to be found out through discourse, and discourse develops non-arbitrarily in response to a context.<sup>250</sup>

As the human attempt to transmit this intuitive revelation of God in Christ to previous generations by the usual natural means of communication, Scripture

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248. W. Speed Hill 'Scripture as Text, Text as Scripture' p. 96-98.

249. *Lawes* III.8.15-16. I.232-234 See Hill above. Hooker cites Acts 2.34 for Peter and Acts 13.36 for Paul. Peter cites Psalm 16.10 in regard to the resurrection of Christ at Acts 2.31. Even if the citation were Acts 2.34, the interpretive principle would still hold since he explicitly cites a Psalm by David, who was ignorant of Jesus of Nazareth, only to say it has been fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth.

250. Hooker very clearly realises that specific books of Scripture were written for specific historically identifiable reasons related to certain particular contexts: 'The severall bookes of scripture having had each some soeverall occasion and particular purpose which caused them to be written, the contents thereof are according to the exigence of that speciall ende whereunto they are intended.' *Lawes* I.14.3 I.127.21-24

represents God through a diverse range of material: 'holie scripture doth take out of all kinds of truth, naturall, historicall, forreine, supernaturall, so much as the matter handled requireth.' (*Lawes* I.14.3 I.127.25-27) These different kinds of truth demonstrate the use of natural reason to move from simple sensual awareness to a knowledge of unsensible things through reflection on a context.<sup>251</sup> Knowledge of God in Christ through the Scripture involves deploying reason in such a way that *sinful* appetitive reason does not dictate a person's approach to their context, reading or hearing Scripture. Instead, the conceits of the church community enable a person to understand their context, reading or hearing Scripture, in terms of an infinite and unsensible good. This hermeneutic process mirrors the process wherein a person can reasonably choose to forgo a temporary difficulty in light of a future reward. The obvious meaning, David's self-understanding in the Psalms, is foregone in pursuit of a superior meaning, the resurrected Christ, through an overcoming of the natural appetite or way of reading.<sup>252</sup> This process is necessary precisely because reason, at least non-apostolic reason, naturally does not grasp God. The natural use of reason in reading the texts of the Scripture, '[comprehending] differences of time, affirmations, negations, and contradictions in speech,' by sinful human agents on the way to demonstrations or probabilities of the sense of the text is the approximation of the intuitive apostolic knowledge of God by the church in its preaching. 'Howbeit still we must here remember, that the Church by hir publique reading of the booke of God preacheth onlie *as a witnesse*. Now the principall thinge required in a witnesse is fidelitie.' (*Lawes* V.XIX.2

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251. See section in last chapter on Reason.

252. 'And so throughout all the writings of the auncient Fathers we see that the words which were do continue; the only difference is, that whereas before they had a literall, they now have a metaphoricall use, and are as so many notes of remembrance unto us...' (*Lawes* IV.11.10 I.316.9-13)

II.68.7-9) Fidelity, according to Hooker, involves 'explication' in the formative regime of the church (*Lawes* V.XIX.1 II.67.23)

*ii. Assent*

The formative regime of the church does not consist in the assumption of the interpretive task by the church community for the reader. If that were the case then—not only would sermons be necessary in the Puritan style—individual believers would not come to an understanding of the text themselves. Unlike the preaching audience in the New Testament, Hooker's contemporary reader of Scripture does so from *within* the society already constituted by the framing conceits of the sacraments established by Jesus Christ. 'it is our custome of simple readinge *not for conversion of infidels* estranged from the howse of God, but for *instruction of men baptised*, bredd and brought up *in the bosome* of the Church.' (*Lawes* V.22.4 II.91.15-18)

While the revelation contained in Scripture requires its potential recipients to work through the conceits, the conceptual content, of the Scriptures for themselves, Hooker maintains the necessity of Christian readers working out the sense of Scripture in an existing Christian society. When read properly, Scripture points to, witnesses to, the end of the created world, God, so that various agents in diverse places can act in accordance with that end. Acting in accordance with God as the chosen end, i.e. voluntarily, in light of a given context, i.e. non-arbitrarily, requires changes in language and in practice if that end is to condition the action of a voluntary agent. The Scriptures, especially those of the New Testament, were written for specific purposes, 'by one occasion and sometimes by another,' to enable

Christians to act *in their situation* in accordance with the end intuitively known by the Apostles. (*Lawes* IV.2.2 I.277.19-20) The Apostles, therefore, did not set down the entirety of their teaching or their church orders in the writings that come down in the New Testament, but only the end of those actions through their remaining teaching.<sup>253</sup> Hooker puts the matter forthrightly:

'Our ende ought alwaies to bee the same; our waies and meanes thereunto not so. The glorie of God and the good of His Church was the thing which the Apostles aymed at, and therefore ought to bee the marke whereat we also leuell.' (*Lawes* IV.2.3 I.278.14-17)

Assent to the revelation of God contained in the New Testament, then, is the commitment to the explication of its end in the present time. The goal of this formation or explication is the reasonable transformation of the appetite into a will reasonably and voluntarily desiring its end, the glory of God, by choosing to act in accordance with a law approximating the second eternal law. This voluntary choosing of a law of action in light of a final end is how one gives assent to what is revealed in Scripture; choosing it makes a difference.

### *III. Conclusion*

Hooker was clearly committed to the task of Re-Christianisation in England during his lifetime. This commitment, however, did not lead him, like his Puritan interlocutors, to endorse a rigid confessionalisation or abstract dis-embodied theoretical system. He did not attempt to institute a narrow world-picture, but, instead, attempted to work out a more comprehensive, flexible, and open

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253. 'Is it necessary that all the orders of the Church which were then [in the Apostolic period] in use should be contained in their bookes? Surely no.... So that in tying the Church to the orders of the Apostles' times, they tye it to a marvelous uncertain rule; unlesse they require the observation of no orders but only those which are known to be apostolicall by the Apostles' own writings. But then is not this their rule of such sufficiencie, that we should use it as a touchstone to try the orders of the Church by for ever.' *Lawes* IV.2.2 I.277.15-278.14

worldview through a combination of inherited world-pictures and the force of God's activity at the most basic level of the person. The person's formative surrender to God, occurring in the most basic drive of the appetite through to the reasonably formed will, makes possible the personal appropriation of these inherited Christian ways of being so that they allow for apprehension of their life, but not necessarily the comprehension of a solving name. The touch of God leads to the revision of over-beliefs.

The process of this revision, personal and communal, is not, however, a generic one occurring in all places. It is linked to the specific historical life of Jesus of Nazareth. He sets the dynamic of transformation to work. The incarnation and its effects in the church begins the process of correcting the dislocation and adulteration of human agents by sin. The graceful resetting of the human agent takes place through a supernatural intervention in Christ that runs parallel to the initial creative act of God while, nevertheless, making use of the natural tendencies, character, and processes of the created world. God acts in creation to resolve, by created means, the impasse of sin. God resolves sin by re-running the original dynamic of human experience in a new way. Whereas originally, human beings in response to the pressing needs of their appetite developed their reason which, in turn, lead them to desire an unsensible good, a higher end of personal and communal orientation, now, under the reign of God, human beings in response to their appetitive contact with Christ in the sacraments develop a reasonable discourse which gives shape to their will, their reasonable desire. This holistic movement of appetite, reason, and will is the orientation—the law or canon of working—of their habitual centre as it approximates the law of Christ, the point of



union between the eternal laws: a supernatural intervention in history progressively reforming human nature.

Learning to read the Bible, to take the world, to receive the sacraments, with *this* set of people in *this* place produces the possibility of a full fact responsible to God. A full fact becomes possible because the human agent learns a sense of self, being a redeemed creature, in light of a felt object, Jesus of Nazareth, whom she knows in an attitude of gracious receptivity. The formative dynamic of piety, then, is present in Hooker's account of the laws of the church and of the world. The character of that piety, moreover, pushes toward, without perhaps fully committing to, a sense of the Christian life as an endless approximation of God's wisdom in the world: the continual approach of the temporal law of the witting voluntary agent to the eternal law of God's being.

The same formative dynamic of piety creating a full fact in the apprehension of Jesus Christ will now be seen in Friedrich Schleiermacher's work. Although he held quite different philosophical, metaphysical, and cultural views, Schleiermacher will give an account of the formation of Christian piety parallel to Hooker in terms of an universal problem of human life whose solution hinges on Jesus of Nazareth. The specific constraints imposed by Jesus of Nazareth on those who begin to understand him, the hard lines created by his specific historical density, begin to create a form of free human life wherein a degree of blessedness is possible in the present time. The problem of sin—the inapplicability of human language, concepts, and forms of life to their context—is resolved by Jesus of Nazareth through his transposition of God into creation in the form of a sinless life. The three-fold movement will be from a sinful or inadequate relation of humanity

to God in creation to a right relation with God in Jesus Christ that creates a form of ecclesial life continually approximating to God's own life in creation. The dynamic will be worked by God on God's creatures without destroying their normal way of being: grace will make use of nature. Grace's use of nature in the church created by Jesus Christ does not, however, settle the redeemed into a set pattern, but, instead, leads them into a continuous circling around or growing approximation of the life of Jesus Christ; the contemporary movement of sanctification towards the sinlessness of Jesus of Nazareth. All of this will be possible only through the continued causative activity of God on believers below the loquacious level.

## Chapter 5. Schleiermacher as Reformer

### *I. Orientation*

Richard R. Niebuhr describes the difficulty of approaching Schleiermacher's theology on the far side of post-liberalism and Neo-orthodoxy:

'much of the impatience with Schleiermacher that one meets today is due to the fact that he wrestles with issues that are no longer regarded as issues, and, on the other hand, he appears to be oblivious to the self-evident character of much that is now taken as absolutely self-evident.'<sup>254</sup>

Niebuhr has in mind the self-evident truth of the 'infinite abyss between God and man' with its accompanying metaphysical dualisms and the intrinsic communicability of the gospel across cultures.<sup>255</sup> Without these anxieties but with evangelical intentions, Schleiermacher begins his dogmatics with the doctrine of creation, its divine government, and human dependence on the divine governor. These doctrines appear in the course of his reflection on the basic Christian experience of divine ordering in the course of everyday life. The experience of this ordering points to the feeling of absolute dependence, or it sometimes frustrates human desires. Confidently, and perhaps obliviously, Schleiermacher does not argue for the existence of the feeling of absolute dependence, but, instead, he assumes it as a given of the Christian experience he 'isolates, describes, and clarifies.'<sup>256</sup>

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254. Richard R. Niebuhr *Schleiermacher on Christ and Religion* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1964) p. 13.

255. Niebuhr *Schleiermacher* p. 13.

256. Niebuhr *Schleiermacher* p. 182. References to *The Christian Faith/Der christliche Glaube* in English are to *The Christian Faith* eds. H.R. Mackintosh & J.S. Stewart (London: T&T Clark, 1999) and in German are to *Der Christliche Glaube nach den Grundsätzen der evangelischen Kirche im Zusammenhange dargestellt Zweite Auflage (1830/31)* ed. Rolf Schäfer (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008). Parenthetical citations in the text will be abbreviated *CF* followed by

The purpose of this chapter and the next is to serve as an orientation to the doctrine of God and the human sense of self that emerges in Schleiermacher's initial discussion of the doctrine of God in the *Glaubenslehre* as the relationship between knowledge of God and self structures the method *and* content of Schleiermacher's dogmatics as a reflection on already existing human faith. These two chapters, therefore, show the initial stage of the formative dynamic wherein a person has a sense of God, or of the unity of the world, but is unable to bring this into alignment with the rest of their lives. I will begin by working out two aspects of this experiential knowledge of God for Schleiermacher. First, the realistic and historical knowledge of God in Schleiermacher's account of faith comes from the historical location of his theology within the evangelical church. The evangelical character of his theology draws upon the Reformation spirit of Protestantism as a movement of Re-Christianisation manifesting itself positively in its ability to be transformatively communicated to others as the basis of actual sanctification. Evangelical commitments, which he views as the spirit of Protestant thought embodied in its confessional documents, play a materially important role in his doctrine of God, which has often been neglected, but must be grasped to understand what is at stake in his revisionary doctrinal constructions.<sup>257</sup> Second, the structures of experience, although they come first in the *Glaubenslehre*, inherent in the experience of redemption will be drawn out as what must be the case for the feeling

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proposition, paragraph, and the page and *CG* followed by proposition number, paragraph, page, and line number. '...to feel oneself absolutely dependent and to be conscious of being in relation with God are one and the same thing...' (*CF* 4.4.17) On the same page Schleiermacher relates the feeling of absolute dependence to our awareness of being unable to exercise any influence on God, which is a way speaking about God's omnipotence as Creator. The points and doctrines are constantly interweaving and implying each other making it difficult to pick them apart without releasing the tension.

257. The work of Matthias Gockel and Richard R. Niebuhr are notable exceptions.

of absolute dependence to take place. Christian experience is related to the basic structures of human acting, knowing, and feeling as a determination of human life by God, rather than the communication of a conceptual idea about God, and are oriented to the coming of the Redeemer. Once these structures have been described, I will turn to his conception of piety as a way of being in relation to God so that God is present to consciousness.

These methodological and ecclesial decisions will be put to work in Schleiermacher's positive consideration of the attributes of God. On the basis of pious experience, Schleiermacher will develop a non-speculative doctrine of God's omnipotence as the root of God's other attributes and as the basis of human knowledge of God as creator. These abstractions from the facts of Christian experience will be filled in by concrete doctrines of redemption, but they will, in turn, influence the way those doctrines present themselves. I will, therefore, finally, take up the frustration of the desire for the feeling of absolute dependence, a frustration relieved by the coming of the Redeemer, in Schleiermacher's discussion of sin and the coordinate divine attributes of holiness and justice. Schleiermacher's piety is an evangelical one rooted in a Protestant understanding of the experience of redemption from sin through grace.

## *II. The Kind of Piety Schleiermacher Has in Mind*

From the very beginning of *The Christian Faith* Schleiermacher relates piety to the communion of the church, and specifically to the faith of evangelical

Christians.<sup>258</sup> He works towards this understanding of evangelical piety by beginning with more general considerations of religion as a prelude to his own historical circumstances as a Protestant theologian. The account he gives of piety, or religion in general, is not, however, a disinterested or empirical account, but, instead, has its origin in the Christian church and its ethics.<sup>259</sup>

'From this it follows that [*The Christian Faith*] entirely disclaims the task of establishing on a foundation of general principles a Doctrine of God, or an Anthropology or Eschatology either, which should be used in the Christian Church though it did not really originate there, or which should prove the propositions of the Christian faith to be consonant with reason.' (*CF* 2.1.3)

Schleiermacher's definition of religion does not try to be universally valid, only to give enough guidance to orient one to the distinctiveness of Christian piety. Christian dogmatics is pursued within historical theology for the purpose of practical church guidance.<sup>260</sup>

The restrictions imposed by the historical circumstances of Christian belief are, for Schleiermacher, threefold: first, the general communicability of the

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258. 'That a Church is nothing but a communion or association relating to religion or piety, is beyond all doubt for us Evangelical (Protestant) Christians, since we regard it as equivalent to degeneration in a Church when it begins to occupy itself with other matters as well' (*CF* 3.1.5)

259. 'The peculiarity of the Christian Church can neither be comprehended and deduced by purely scientific methods nor can be grasped by mere empirical methods.' (*CF* 2.2.3) 'Insofar as one tries to make do with a merely empirical method of interpreting Christianity, he cannot achieve a genuine knowledge of it. One's task is rather to endeavour both to understand the essence of Christianity in contradistinction to other churches and other kinds of faith, and to understand the nature of piety and of religious communities in relation to all the other activities of the human spirit.' Friedrich Schleiermacher *Brief Outline of Theology as a Field of Study* trans. Terrence N. Tice (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2011) § 21

260. 'Theology is a positive science, whose parts join into a cohesive whole only through their common relation to a particular mode of faith, i.e., a particular way of being conscious of God. Thus, the various parts of Christian theology belong together only by virtue of their relation to 'Christianity.' This is the sense in which the word 'theology' will always be used here.' *Brief Outline on the Study of Theology* §1. Compare with: 'When this same knowledge [reflection on Christian history] is acquired and possessed without relation to the 'government' of the Church, it ceases to be theological and devolves to those sciences to which it belongs according to its varied contents.' §6 'Insofar as one tries to make do with a merely empirical method of interpreting Christianity, he cannot achieve a genuine knowledge of it. One's task is rather to endeavour both to understand the essence of Christianity in contradistinction to other churches and other kinds of faith, and to understand the nature of piety and of religious communities in relation to all the other activities of the human spirit.' § 21

'Accordingly, historical theology is the actual corpus of theological study, which is connected with science, as such, by means of philosophical theology and with the active Christian life by means of practical theology.' *Brief Outline* § 28.

Christian faith; second, the general constraints of *any* form of *Christian* piety; third, the doctrinal system a theologian inherits in his or her specific communion. The first constraint insists on the evangelical nature of belief; the second relates to the decisive influence of the founder of Christian piety, Jesus Christ; the third to the legitimate authority of the received experience of the church.<sup>261</sup>

#### *A. Evangelical*

Christian faith, as the fulfilment of human existence, is capable of being communicated to all people in a relatively straightforward way, namely preaching. 'The whole work of the Redeemer Himself was conditioned by the communicability of His self-consciousness by means of speech, and similarly Christianity has always and everywhere spread itself solely by preaching.' (*CF* 15.2.77) The communication of the Redeemer's influence through his speech was effective for both Jews and Gentiles, and, did not, therefore presuppose a shared speculative worldview. The presence of the Redeemer purifies non-Christian religious consciousness rather than destroying or abolishing it.

'With this agrees what the apostle says when he represents even Polytheism as a perversion of the original consciousness of God which underlies it, and when, in this evidence of the longing which all these fancies have failed to satisfy, he finds an obscure presentiment of the true God.' (*CF* 7.3.33-34)

Evangelical faith may lead one to the way of life shared in the church, including its doctrines and, perhaps, its speculative tendencies, but faith begins in the individual experience of Jesus Christ.<sup>262</sup>

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261. 'When this [theological] knowledge is acquired and possessed without relation to the 'government' of the Church, it ceases to be theological and devolves to those sciences to which it belongs according to its varied contents.' *Brief Outline* §6.

262. Describing the origins of different religious communions, Schleiermacher attacks the notion that one could move from one communion to another 'simply by dissolving the one historical connexion and entering into another' without undergoing some inward change. (*CF* 10.1.45)

Second, Jesus Christ, then, provides the basis for all Christian piety. As will be shown more fully below, the distinctive feature of piety is the feeling of absolute dependence. The feeling of absolute dependence centres human life, as one part of finite existence, on a single principle undergirding all of finite existence. Schleiermacher's account of religion mirrors his description of the development of the feeling of absolute dependence as it comes to be understood in mediated consciousness related to all finite existence. The self-consciousness's inability to relate all of the religious affections, or states of mind, to one 'Most High and Infinite' in preference to a local or partial aspect of finite existence is the root of both Polytheism and idol worship. The gods and idols of this form of belief are gods of some *thing* or place, which is to say they relate to a specific concept produced by the reflective consciousness. Such concepts are, by their nature, limited to certain aspects of the self-consciousness.<sup>263</sup> The different, historical, and integral religious communions, therefore, relate to each other '*as different stages of development, and as different kinds.*' (CF 7.31) They are bound by their restriction of the feeling of absolute dependence to some particular determination of the self-consciousness. The removal of this constraint is what Schleiermacher means by redemption.<sup>264</sup>

The relationship between the human incapacity for the feeling of absolute dependence and the redemption are not 'one particular religious element among others, but all other pious emotions [*fromme Erregungen*] are related to it' in

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263. 'Idol-worship proper is based upon a confused state of the self-consciousness which marks the lowest condition of man, since in it the higher and the lower are so little distinguished that even the feeling of absolute dependence is reflected as arising from a particular object to be apprehended by the senses. So, too, with Polytheism...' (CF 8.2.35)

264. 'Under these conditions [the alternation between sensible and higher self-consciousness] no satisfaction of the impulse towards the God-consciousness will be possible; and so, if such a satisfaction is to be attained, a redemption is necessary, since this condition is nothing but a kind of imprisonment or constraint of the feeling of absolute dependence.' (CF 11.2.55)



Christian religion (*CF* 11.3.55)<sup>265</sup> 'And secondly, redemption is posited as a thing which has been universally and completely accomplished by Jesus of Nazareth.' (*CF* 11.3.56) Schleiermacher does not treat the specifics of Christian redemption at this point in his *Glaubenslehre*, but points to the constitutive role Christ plays in the founding of the Christian church or communion. Christ's foundation of the Christian communion, the religious communion wherein the feeling of absolute dependence becomes possible, as the Redeemer follows from his redemptive *influence* rather than the communication of specifically religious doctrine.<sup>266</sup> Judaism and Islam, for instance, could be the same even if their law or revelation were given by some other person.

'But Christ is distinguished from all others as Redeemer alone and for all, and is in no wise regarded as having been at any time in need of redemption Himself; and is therefore separated from the beginning from all other men, and endowed with redeeming power from His birth.' (*CF* 11.4.58)

In a wholly singular way for Schleiermacher, Christ is the cause and redemption the effect. An evangelical—and so Reformation—insistence on the project of turning all to Christ is a necessary ingredient in Schleiermacher's theology.

### *B. Protestant*

The third constraint on Christian belief is ecclesial doctrine taken as the expression of Christian religious consciousness.<sup>267</sup> The concrete historical circumstances of Schleiermacher's theology is the Protestant church in Europe, and

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265. The translation is altered. The standard English translation renders both *religiöses* and *fromme* as 'religious.' 'Emotions' does not seem to be a completely adequate translation of *Erregungen* either, but it makes sense if the receptive aspect of the word is kept in mind.

266. Other non-Christian religions' 'main business is the founding of the communion upon definite doctrine and in definite form.' (*CF* 11.4.57)

267. 'For there is only one source from which all Christian doctrine is derived, namely, the self-proclamation of Christ; and there is only one type of doctrine, for, whether more perfect or less perfect, it all arises out of the religious consciousness itself and its direct expression.' (*CF* 19.PS.92)

more specifically the union of Lutheran and Reformed churches in Prussia. Protestantism, although 'the Reformers and their first adherents were conscious only of the wish to purify,' comes to be a distinctive form of Christian communion in opposition to Catholicism. (CF 24.103)<sup>268</sup> The distinctive spirit of Protestant piety '*makes the individual's relation to the Church dependent on his relation to Christ, while [Catholicism] contrariwise makes the individual's relation to Christ dependent on his relation to the Church.*' (CF 24.103) The implicit criticism of Catholicism, 'in ascribing everything to the Church and tracing everything to the Church, it deprives Christ of the honour due to Him, and puts Him in the background, and even in a measure subordinates Him to the Church,' is that it represents something like the incomplete forms of Monotheism that invest something within the world that is not Jesus Christ with the ability to call forth the feeling of absolute dependence. (CF 24.3.106) This way of believing would make Christ simply the communicator of doctrine, e.g. church teaching, not the decisive source of redeeming influence.

As far as doctrine is concerned, there are two practical consequences of this Protestant context: first, the non-speculative character of evangelical theology; second, the relative authority of the Protestant confessions.

Protestant theology does not possess an independent existence apart from its role in the government of the Christian church. Dogmatic work responds to the desires of the immediate self-consciousness '*solely through the means ordained by Christ, in their genuine and uncorrupted form.*' (CF 16.PS.83) The intellectual desire satisfied in Christian doctrine, the immediate self-consciousness's desire for

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<sup>268</sup> On Schleiermacher's general milieu see Martin Redeker *Schleiermacher: Life and Thought* trans. John Wallhausser (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1973), B.A. Gerrish *Schleiermacher: Prince of the Church*, (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1988) , and Kurt Nowak *Schleiermacher: Leben, Werk, und Wirkung* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2001)

clarity in reflection, arises only in reference to the historically limited self-proclamation of Jesus Christ, and, therefore, it does not overlap with other desires to speculatively arrive at an Absolute.<sup>269</sup> Christian theology responds to a historical given, Jesus Christ, that cannot be deduced from universal or rational principles, nor are its theologians *as theologians* concerned with elaborating such principles.<sup>270</sup> Thus, 'the various parts of Christian theology belong together only by virtue of their relation to 'Christianity.'"<sup>271</sup>

Schleiermacher locates the defining mark of evangelical theology in the spirit embodied in the evangelical confessions. In the *Glaubenslehre* Schleiermacher admits it is strange that 'the confessional documents of the Evangelical Church...are...given a prior place to the New Testament Scriptures themselves.' (CF 27.1.112) Scriptural warrant alone is not sufficient to establish the evangelical character of a doctrine 'since the appeal to Scripture can directly prove only that a proposition... is Christian, while its distinctively Protestant content is not decided upon.' (CF 27.1.113) The distinctiveness of the Protestant communion has been transmitted in these documents as they have been corrected in light of Scripture.

In addition to the general comments on Protestant theology in *The Christian Faith*, Schleiermacher handled the proper use of the confessional documents more

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269. 'The purely scientific activity, whose task is the contemplation of existence, must, if it is to come to anything, either begin or end with the Supreme Being; and so there may be forms of philosophy containing propositions of speculative import about the Supreme Being which, in spite of the fact that they arose out of the purely scientific interest, are, when taken individually, difficult to distinguish from the corresponding propositions which arose purely out of reflection upon the religious emotions, but have been worked out dialectically. But when they are considered in their connexions, these two indubitably show differences of the most definite kind.' (CF 16.PS.81-82)

270. 'In one respect all Christian dogmas are supra-rational, in another they are all rational. They are supra-rational in the respect in which everything experiential is supra-rational. For there is an inner experience to which they may all be traced: they rest upon a *given*; and apart from this they could not have arisen, by deduction or synthesis, from universally recognised and communicable propositions.' (CF 13.PS.67)

271. *Brief Outline* §1

specifically in a series of sermons on the Augsburg Confession in the middle of the same year, 1830, the second edition of the *Glaubenslehre* was published.<sup>272</sup> The Protestant distinctives in the spirit of the confession coincide with his understanding of the progress of monotheism away from idolatry. The 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Augsburg Confession occasioned a renewal of the conflicts, which Schleiermacher had been involved in, dormant since the 1817 union of Lutheran and Reformed churches in Prussia.<sup>273</sup> At this time

'[p]arties predictably re-formed along similar lines with confessionalist/supernaturalist theologians and clergy on one extreme and Enlightenment rationalists on the other, the one committed to stringent confessional adherence and uniformity of doctrine, the other to a calculated policy of sola ratio in all matters theological and religious.'<sup>274</sup>

As the epistolary conflict gained steam, a royal order to the ministers in the Evangelical church to celebrate the Confession intensified the conflict between the two parties, by causing worry among the Reformed that the character of the church union would be tipped in a Lutheran direction.<sup>275</sup>

Schleiermacher's response was to reject *both* of these options. Instead, the confessions should be taken up in a 'respectful but constructively critical

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272. I am concentrating here on the sermons given in 1830, but Schleiermacher also treated the confessions in a series of writings at different stages of his career. The exchange of letters, and a helpful contextualisation of the conflicts around the anniversary of the Augsburg Confession, can be found in *Friedrich Schleiermacher on Creeds, Confessions, and Church Unions*. tr. Iain Nicol (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2004). An analysis of the influence of the confessions on *The Christian Faith* in relation to these writings is in Walter E. Wyman Jr 'The Role of the Protestant Confessions in Schleiermacher's *The Christian Faith*' *The Journal of Religion* 2007 355-385. Although he focusses on an earlier edition of the *Glaubenslehre* the most thorough investigation of the influence is Martin Ohst, *Schleiermacher und die Bekenntnisschriften Eine Untersuchung zu seiner Reformations- und Protestantismusdeutung* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1989),.

273. *Reformed but Ever Reforming: Sermons in Relation to the Celebration of the Handing Over of the Augsburg Confession (1830)* trans. Ian G. Nicol (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1997) p. iix.

274. *Reformed but Ever Reforming* pp. iix-ix.

275. *Reformed but Ever Reforming* pp. xi-xii. Schleiermacher was not entirely above traditional rivalry. He wrote his tract 'On Election' to convince Lutherans to adopt the Reformed, or Augustinian-Calvinian, position on election.

attitude.<sup>276</sup> In these sermons he argues for a continuation of the agenda, or spirit, of the Reformation without taking up the confessional documents in their entirety through an appeal to Pauline description of evangelical freedom in Galatians.

For Schleiermacher, reform became necessary at the time of Augsburg Confession as response to

'a serious corruption of Christianity by a captivity to regulations similar to that opposed by the apostle had increasingly crept in over several centuries and that elders of the church...had led the flocks in their charge back to that time of immature dependence.'<sup>277</sup>

The Reformation was an attack upon 'a whole multitude of external actions' standing in the way of living faith, an attack formally similar, if not identical, to Paul's attack on the requirement for Gentile Christians to observe Mosaic law.<sup>278</sup> Trust was put in something other than Christ to sustain the believer, and as a result Christ was no longer alive in believers. The goal of the reform was two-fold: first, that Christ live in believers in the present, in the flesh; second, believers rely upon

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276. *Reformed but Ever Reforming* pp. xv. cf. 'From this it follows that, in going back to the Symbols, if we are to avoid making that procedure a hindrance to the further development of doctrine, we must, in the first place rather have regard to the spirit than cling to the letter, and, in the second place, we must apply the exegetical art to the letter itself, in order to make a right use of it.' (CF 27.2.115) Schleiermacher was trying to extend the Reformation in the present, not to initiate a second more thorough Reformation. 'With Schleiermacher . . . a period in the history of Protestant theology begins which is essentially defined by the striving for an interpretation and reception of Reformation theology that would be fruitful for the modern world.' Martin Ohst *Schleiermacher und die Bekenntnisschriften*, 267. "Die Eruptionen, unter denen der Boden Europas erzitterte, führten Novalis zu der Vision einer zweiten Reformation, deren Konturen in allumgreifender Totalität gedacht waren." Kurt Nowak *Schleiermacher und die Frühromantik: eine literaturgeschichtliche Studie zum romantischen Religionsverständnis und Menschenbild am Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts in Deutschland* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck + Ruprecht GM, 1986) p. 45.

277. *Reformed but Ever Reforming* p. 55.

278. 'Now, at the time of our church reform this could no longer have been the issue. Rather, when our predecessors would not hear of having any works of the law on a par with a living faith they were declaiming against a whole multitude of external actions such as prayers and pilgrimages, fastings and penances, alms for the poor and precious for the honour of God, all of which had to be imposed by the consecrated servants of the church upon those souls given into their charge so that they might make satisfaction and so be justified before God. It was against these precepts and against the false trust nourished by them that those Christian teachers who established the foundations of our church reform fought so ardently. Still, the offerings and gifts, rites and prayers ordained in the law of Moses and even moreso in the precepts of the early fathers, and these prescriptions of the law of the ancient church and of the fullness of priestly power are not in effect two different things but one and the same.' *Reformed but Ever Reforming* p. 49.

this life alone and are, therefore, 'completely exempt from the law.'<sup>279</sup> This faith does not only consist in knowing or in doing, although those are necessary results of faith, but consists in surrender to his influence.<sup>280</sup> Christ's living influence is the source of faithful Christian action and thought, and this power retains its potency up through the present day so that believers have no need to supplement his influence.<sup>281</sup> The confessionalists, then, despite their avowed closeness to the Reformers, would return the church to the servitude left behind at the Reformation.<sup>282</sup> The rationalists, however, are just as mistaken in their desire to leave behind any historic norms, to dissociate themselves from Christ in order to live in their own power: '[I]f you think you can proceed in the Spirit without him and ascend from one clear insight to another, you will suddenly notice that you are simply at the point ending in the flesh.'<sup>283</sup> Either way, both parties return to a version of works righteousness with its 'immature dependence on human precepts.'<sup>284</sup>

Schleiermacher succinctly sums up the goal of church reform begun in the Augsburg Confession: 'to demolish all false supports on which misdirected Christians had still relied and to re-establish this righteousness based on faith alone.'<sup>285</sup> The only way to pursue this goal was to return to the living influence of

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279. *Reformed but Ever Reforming* p. 67.

280. *Reformed but Ever Reforming* p. 68-69.

281. *Reformed but Ever Reforming* p. 74.

282. 'All the more so because we have already just seen how we prove ourselves transgressors when we re-establish the law beside faith and now that we are persuaded that this applies not only to every law of works but also to every law of words and doctrine.' *Reformed but Ever Reforming* p. 73.

283. *Reformed but Ever Reforming* p. 75. compare with Kurt Nowak's point on the dehistoricising tendency among Schleiermacher's contemporaries. 'Unter ideengeschichtlichem Aspekt ordnete sich die ästhetische Revolution der Frühromantik in einen Prozeß der Dematerialisierung der Geschichte ein. Ein wichtiger Grund dafür war die Bewertung der französischen Revolution als ein vor allen geistig-moralisches Ereignis.' *Schleiermacher und die Frühromantik* p. 56.

284. *Reformed but Ever Reforming*, p. 75.

285. *Reformed but Ever Reforming* p. 77.

Christ in whom everything is fulfilled and from whom everything develops. If knowing and doing are insufficient—if both the confessionalists and rationalists are wrong—in leaning on the law of works, then the only way open is the determination of the believer in a way other than knowing or doing. Schleiermacher locates this determination in feeling:

'Thus both hypotheses lead to the same point: that there are both a Knowing and a Doing which pertain to piety, but neither of these constitutes the essence of piety: they only pertain to inasmuch as the stirred-up Feeling sometimes comes to rest in a thinking which fixes it, sometimes discharges itself in an action which expresses it.' (CF 3.4.10-11)

Schleiermacher, working from his historical religious commitments, develops his theological system by locating the continuing work of Christ in the person at the most basic level, immediate self-consciousness or feeling, which is 'prior' to knowing and doing, while nevertheless maintaining the historical, concrete ground of the determination of feeling in the Christian community.<sup>286</sup>

### *C. Piety and Feeling*

*The piety which forms the basis of all ecclesiastical communions is, considered purely in itself, neither a Knowing nor a Doing, but a modification of Feeling [Gefühl], or of immediate self-consciousness.* (CF 3.5/CG 3.20.2) Piety, at least actually existing piety in various churches, exists as a modification of feeling, the persistent subject uniting knowing and doing, in relation to the world it finds

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286. 'But the truth is that the new life of each individual springs from that of the community, while the life of the community springs from no other individual life than that of the Redeemer.' (CF 113.1.525)

'For if it be allowed that there are divine workings of converting grace in no actual historical relation to the personal efficacy of Christ (even though it is as workings of Christ that they come to consciousness), there would be no security that this inward mystic Christ was identical with the historical Christ.' (CF 108.5.492)

itself in, which is also patient of human influence.<sup>287</sup> The common feeling behind these various expressions of piety is '*the consciousness of being absolutely dependent, or, which is the same thing, of being in relation with God.*' (CF 4.12) It is the consciousness that all of human activity, its free and spontaneous expression, has a source outside the human self, a 'whence' of human existence.<sup>288</sup> Absolute dependence on God cannot be fixed on an object under creaturely influence, and, yet, it always goes along with a definite experience in the world.<sup>289</sup> Christian piety is a

*'monotheistic faith, belonging to the teleological type of religion [i.e. the moral task predominates the religious affections], and is essentially distinguished from other such faiths by the fact that in it everything is related to the redemption accomplished by Jesus of Nazareth.'* (CF 11.52)

Schleiermacher divides the self-consciousness into mediate and immediate states accompanying each other in the human life. The division of the self-consciousness is fundamental for Schleiermacher in the *Glaubenslehre*:

*'[I]n every self-consciousness there are two elements, which we might call respectively a self-caused element [ein Sichselbstsetzen] and a non-self-caused element [ein Sichselbstnichtiggesetzhaben]; or a Being and a Having-by-some-means-come-to-be [ein Sein und ein Irgendwiegewordensein].'* (CF 4.1.13/CG 4.1.15-17)

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287. 'Feeling is not ethical subjectivity, cognitive-theoretical subjectivity, or emotional subjectivity. It is subjectivity as such, consciousness itself, the common generic element present in all the more determinate and specific forms. Feeling, or consciousness as such, is the organ of receptivity, or man's openness to and immediate union with being.' Robert Williams 'Schleiermacher and Feuerbach on the Intentionality of Religious Consciousness' *The Journal of Religion*, Vol. 53, No. 4 (Oct., 1973), p. 431

288. '...it is the consciousness that the whole of our spontaneous activity comes from a source outside of us in just the same sense in which anything towards which we should have a feeling of absolute freedom must have proceeded entirely from ourselves.' (CF 4.3.16) 'As regards the identification of absolute dependence with 'relation to God' in our proposition: this is to be understood in the sense that the *Whence* of our receptive and active existence, as implied in the self-consciousness, is to be designated by the word 'God' and that this is for us the really original signification of that word.' (CF 4.4.16)

289. 'Since the feeling of absolute dependence, even in the realm of redemption, only puts in an appearance, *i.e.* becomes a real self-consciousness in time, in so far as it is aroused by another determination of the self-consciousness and unites itself therewith, every formula for that feeling is a formula for a definite state of mind; and consequently all proposition of Dogmatics must be capable of such formulae.' (CF 30.1.125)



The mediated self-consciousness occurs as a coming together of the self-caused element, human conceptual reflection, with a non-self-caused element, the circumstances or context of the self; the mediation of the latter by the former.<sup>290</sup> The circumstances determine the particularities of the self-consciousness and the mediated self-consciousness is the result of the human attempt, which is entirely natural, to 'trace the origin of our particular state.' (CF 4.1.13) Put simply, mediate self-consciousness is what happens when a human person tries to make sense of himself and the world around him by reflecting on these things by making them objects of discursive examination. *Immediate* self-consciousness, however, is the human person in her relationship to her circumstances before trying to *make* sense of them in this way; it is her 'immediate existential relation to the world.'<sup>291</sup>

*Gefühl*, as *immediate* self-consciousness, does not depend on the formulation of representations or of the application of concepts, but is modification of the subject as it relates itself to the world persisting 'unaltered during a series of diverse acts of thinking and willing.' (CF 3.2.7) Feeling does not simply accompany the various mental states. It is the aspect of self-consciousness that relates to the world immediately present to undivided Being, as non-reflective reception of the concrete world of circumstances.<sup>292</sup> *Gefühl* should not be understood in terms of unconscious states as these are detached from our concrete circumstances or a result of our own reflection. The reciprocal relationship of the self-consciousness

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290. '...every consciousness of self is at the same time the consciousness of a variable state of being. But in this distinction of the latter from the former, it is implied that the variable does not proceed purely from the self-identical, for in that case it could not be distinguished from it' (CF 4.1.12-13)

291. 'What I understand by the pious feeling does not at all proceed from representation [Vorstellung] but rather is the original expression of an immediate existential relation [ein unmittelbares Existentialverhältnis].' Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Sendschreiben an Luecke*, hrsg. Hermann Mulert, *Studien zur Geschichte des neuern Protestantismus* (Giessen: Toepelmann, 1908), p. 13. cited in Williams 'Schleiermacher and Feuerbach' p. 432.

292. Schleiermacher quotes a contemporary definition as 'closely akin' to his own: 'The immediate presence of whole undivided Being.' (CF 3.2.7)

to the world forms the basis for the specific modification of feeling responsible for Christian piety. The nature of this reciprocal relationship as a continuous and complementary modification of self-consciousness and circumstances provides the strictures for reflective Christian knowledge as expressive of the self *and* dependent on the historical Christian community. The relation of the self to the world in terms of feeling, knowing, and doing can be understood in terms of freedom and dependence.

Schleiermacher clarifies how the self-consciousness relates to the world in reciprocal terms of freedom and dependence: 'In self-consciousness there are only two elements: the one expresses the existence of the subject for itself, the other is coexistence with the Other.' (CF 4.1.13) The former element is freedom, the expression of 'spontaneous movement and activity', and the latter is dependence, 'a receptivity affected from some outside quarter.' (CF 4.2.13-14) The two elements express the reciprocity between the subject and the world around it as mutually influential. Whatever determines the self-consciousness as it interacts with the world is itself patient of some influence from the self-consciousness, and the self-consciousness never simply expresses itself without some counter-influence from the world around it.<sup>293</sup> The circumstances the self-consciousness relates to retain the stamp of human influence upon them as they in turn affect human feeling.<sup>294</sup> As a feeling, this relative dependence, therefore, relates to certain circumstances in varying degrees depending upon the particulars of the situation. Children feel a

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293. 'But as we never do exist except along with an Other, so even in ever outward-tending self-consciousness the element of receptivity, in some way or other affected, is the primary one; and even the self-consciousness which accompanies an action (acts of knowing included), while it predominantly expresses spontaneous movement and activity, is always related (though the relation is often quite an indefinite one) to a prior movement of affective receptivity, through which the original 'agility' received its direction.' (CF 4.1.13)

294. On this point see Kevin Hector's helpful discussion of Schleiermacher's notion of *Gefühl* in *Theology without Metaphysics* (Cambridge: CUP, 2011) pp. 77-86. Especially his point that the world is not blank but 'norm-laden' for Schleiermacher.

diminishing sense of dependence on their parents, while a citizen feels dependent on a state in accordance with the form of government it adopts.<sup>295</sup> Self-consciousness, then, is called reciprocal as that term 'expresses our connexion with everything which either appeals to our receptivity or is subjected to our activity.' (CF 4.2.14)

The self-consciousness alternates between a remaining-in-self (*Insichleiben*) and going beyond the self (*Aussichheraustreten*) in the course of an engaged human life. Doing interacts with the material and historical forces, flows, and exigencies of the world as it exercises relative influence on other parts of the world. Knowing should not be associated with remaining in the self as the possession of knowledge requires use to fill in the concept with a concrete application of the concept, what Schleiermacher calls a judgment.<sup>296</sup> Thus knowing becomes an 'endeavour to connect the apprehended truth with other truths or to seek out cases for its application'(CF 3.5.11) eventually passing beyond the self to engage with the world, and, as a result, becomes a kind of doing.<sup>297</sup> The distinction between knowing and doing is, therefore, only relative.

'Feeling' describes an experience Schleiermacher takes as common to people in general: the persistence of self-consciousness 'unaltered during a series of diverse acts of thinking and willing (*verschiedenartiger Akte des Denkens und Wollens*).'(CF 3.2.7/CG 3.2.23.11-12) *Gefühl* or feeling, then, is the self's

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295. So that 'neither an absolute feeling of dependence, *i.e.* without any feeling of freedom in relation to the co-determinant, nor an absolute feeling of freedom, *i.e.* without any feeling of dependence in relation to the co-determinant, is to be found in the whole realm.'(CF 4.2.15)

296. Schleiermacher explores this point at length in *Dialectic or, The Art of Doing Philosophy: A Study Edition of the 1811 Notes*. Translated by Terrence N. Tice. (Atlanta; Scholars Press, 1996).. In Lecture 10 he goes so far as to say even 'a=a' abstracts from an originally organic function. Human knowledge cannot escape its origin in the world.

297. 'An instance of thinking that is formal can never be one of knowing but is only a preliminary apparatus for becoming an instance of knowing. It can become an instance of knowing only in that what is vacuous is (1) filled in and (2) organic function is also constantly present within it, even if in a minimal way.' *Dialectic* Lecture 9 p. 20

orientation in and to the world in general, linking moments of knowing and doing.<sup>298</sup> The pre-reflective character of feeling does not prevent it from directing reflective activity (such as knowing or doing), or from being concrete human experience of circumstances. So, to use Schleiermacher's own examples, 'penitence, contrition, confidence and joy in God' are religious feelings *as* pre-reflective ways of relating to one's circumstances before the application of concepts, e.g. judgments of self-reproach (*CF* 3.4.11) Feelings of penitence and joy respond to the circumstances surrounding the self and are, in a sense, bound to the character of those circumstances.<sup>299</sup> On this model *Gefühl*, as *immediate* self-consciousness, 'belongs altogether to the realm of receptivity, it is entirely an abiding-in-self' and is in antithesis to knowing and doing, as *mediated* or objective forms of self-consciousness. (*CF* 3.4.8) Feeling has to do with how a person relates to the world—knows and acts in it—so that piety is not one thing a person does, but is a way of taking the world as a whole as a response to the concrete world around her. As a modification of *Gefühl*, piety is a relation orienting the self-consciousness as it knows and acts in its specific circumstances.

The non-reflective character of *Gefühl* does not exempt it from the influence of or determination by the world around it. Its being non-self-caused means it is affected or caused by its circumstances; it too is never naturally

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298. 'For indeed, it is the case in general that the immediate self-consciousness is always the mediating link in the transition between moments in which Knowing predominates and those in which Doing predominates, so that a different Doing may proceed from the same Knowing in different people according as a different determination of self-consciousness enters in.' (*CF* 3.4.8-9)

Since they both go beyond the self, knowing and doing take place within the dialectic of relative freedom and dependence. Their location makes them variable factors in the self-consciousness and, for Schleiermacher, unsuitable locations for piety.

299. Kevin Hector summarises Schleiermacher's point: 'Gefühl' thus has to do with the innumerable ways in which one is affected by, and copes with, various circumstances prior to and apart from conscious reflection and judgement—the ways, in other words, that one is always already disposed toward oneself and one's environment.' *Theology without Metaphysics* p. 78.

absolutely free. The relative freedom and dependence of feeling in the self-consciousness illustrate the limits Schleiermacher places on the self-consciousness, 'a consciousness of our existence in the world or of our co-existence with the world... a series in which the feeling of freedom and the feeling of dependence are divided.' (CF 4.2.15) *Gefühl*, though, is not simply an orientation to the various elements of the world, but it is also a way of taking the world as a unity. As a member of the reciprocal forces of the world, self-consciousness can also be aware of the world's dependence on a source outside itself. The feeling of absolute dependence, as *immediate* or non-conceptual self-consciousness, is consciousness 'that the whole of our spontaneous activity comes from a source outside of us.' (CF 4.3.16) The consciousness of absolute dependence is non-conceptual, since concepts always relate to the world in some way, constant, since it is not affected by a single worldly determinant, and not the result of human exertion, since this always looks back to a certain determined receptivity. At the same time, the feeling of absolute dependence must be related to some determinate feeling, or else it would be a speculative or an original conception forged in an outgoing activity.<sup>300</sup> The determinant, the whence of the feeling of absolute dependence, the consciousness of the source of the world's receptivity and activity, is God, and, yet, 'this 'Whence' is not the world in the sense of the totality of temporal existence, and still less is it any single part of the world.' (CF 4.4.16) The basic form here mirrors

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300. 'In the next place, we have to note that our proposition is intended to oppose the view that this feeling of dependence is itself conditioned by some previous knowledge of God. And this may indeed be the more necessary since many people claim to be in the sure possession of a concept of God, altogether a matter of conception and original, *i.e.* independent of any feeling; and in the strength of this higher self-consciousness, which indeed may come pretty near to being a feeling of absolute freedom, they put far from them, as something almost infra-human, that very feeling which for us is the basic type of all piety... So that in the first instance God signifies for us simply that which is the co-determinant in this feeling and to which we trace our being in such a state; and any further content of the idea must be evolved out of the fundamental import assigned to it.' (CF 4.4.17)

the Protestant position explicitly endorsed by Schleiermacher: what is most fundamental about human beings is *given* and cannot be reduced to a product of human striving.

### *III. The Feeling of Absolute Dependence*

The whence of the feeling of absolute dependence is human feeling as it is determined by God. Unlike all other feelings, however, the source of this feeling is not *a* perceptible object given in human experience.<sup>301</sup> Nor is the determinant one picked out through the application of a concept in an act of knowing, since to do so would locate within the realm of relative dependence. Schleiermacher puts the matter bluntly: 'The transference of the idea of God to any perceptible object, unless is all the time conscious that it is a piece of purely arbitrary symbolism, is always a corruption...' (CF 4.4.18) In the feeling of absolute dependence, immediate self-consciousness takes up the world as such, the entirety of finitude, in its dependent relation on God.<sup>302</sup> *Gefühl* does not relate to *a* determination, but to its being determined at all, and does so without the application of a conceptual apparatus or variation in time.<sup>303</sup> In this case feeling, as explained above, can and does pass into knowing and doing, it cannot, however, be reduced to any single

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301. '...any possibility of God being in any way *given* is entirely excluded, because anything that is outwardly given must be given as an object of exposed to our counter-influence, however slight that may be.' (CF 4.4.18)

302. '...in so far as we are constituent parts of the world, and therefore in so far as we take up the world into our self-consciousness and expand the latter into a general consciousness of finitude, we are conscious of ourselves as absolutely dependent... For if we are conscious of ourselves, as such and in our finitude, as absolutely dependent, the same holds true of all finite existence, and in this connexion we take up the whole world along with ourselves into the unity of self-consciousness.' (CF 8.2.35)

303. 'Therefore, in itself it [consciousness of absolute dependence] cannot possible be at one moment thus and at another moment otherwise, nor can it by intermission be present at one moment and absent at another.' (CF 5.3.21)

concept or representation. In other words, piety, as an orientation to one's concrete circumstances, forms language without itself being language.<sup>304</sup>

The reciprocal character of human life, including immediate self-consciousness, in its relationship with the world, of which it is a part, is the basis of Schleiermacher's religious realism.<sup>305</sup> Self-consciousness is an experience only as it is determined in some specific way by its circumstances. Even creative or spontaneous activity must be determined by an object that is given in some sense exerting influence on one's prior receptivity. The mutual influence of the world and the self, as one within the world, provides the limits for the experience and expression of the self. The limits imposed by context, whether cultural, political, natural, or whatever, mean that 'there can be no such thing as a feeling of absolute

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304. 'Meanwhile, religious men know that it is only in speech that they cannot avoid the anthropomorphic: in their immediate consciousness they keep the object separate from its mode of representation, and they endeavour to show their opponents that without this integration of feeling no certainty is possible even for the strongest forms of objective consciousness or of transitive action, and that, to be consistent, they must limit themselves entirely to the lower grade of life.' (CF 5.PS.26) In *Hermeneutics and Criticism and Other Writings*. trans. Andrew Bowie. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998) p. 15: "The insistence on historical interpretation is only the correct insistence on the connection of the writers of the N.T. with their age. (Dangerous expression 'concepts of the time'.) But this insistence becomes mistaken if it denies the new concept-forming power of Christianity [*die neue begriffsbildende Kraft des Christentums*] and wants to explain everything from what is already there... The whole issue then depends on the relationship of grammatical and psychological interpretation, for the new concepts arose from the particular enlivening of the mind [*Gemüts-erregung*].' And *Hermeneutics: The Handwritten Manuscripts*. Translated by James Duke and Jack Forstman. Edited by Heinz Kimmerle. Atlanta; Scholars Press, 1977 p. 50 'Christianity has created language. From its very beginning it has been a potentiating linguistic spirit, and it still is. It is providential that it could not annex itself to Hellenistic truth.'

305. Hans Frei makes this point well: 'God-consciousness is identical with self-consciousness only as the latter is in a specifically qualified or determined state, i.e., as consciousness in which God is present; or, to state it another way, God-consciousness is identical with awareness of oneself as absolutely dependent. The content of God-consciousness is given to experience. To this extent one may call Schleiermacher a realist rather than a subjectivist. He did not identify the ideal and the real, nor did he conceptually identify consciousness and its determinant.' *Faith and Ethics: The Theology of H. Richard Niebuhr* ed. Paul Ramsey (New York: Harper & Row, 1957) p. 37. I am leaving to the side of this discussion Schleiermacher's own speculative philosophy, which may in fact be more Idealist in character. For an argument that Schleiermacher's theology and philosophy formally cohere see John E. Thiel *God and World in Schleiermacher's Dialektik and Glaubenslehre* (dissertation for McMaster University, 1977).

freedom,' nor, apart from the experience of God, a feeling of absolute dependence. (CF 4.3.15)<sup>306</sup>

Knowledge of the feeling of absolute dependence is, therefore, knowledge of a relationship expressed in conceptual terms (i.e. brought before the reflective self-consciousness) ill-fitted to their object.<sup>307</sup> Hans Frei describes the character of this odd knowledge:

'[Schleiermacher] rejected the notion that the mind is capable of concrete comprehension of the internal relation between the Absolute (the "transcendent ground") and finite mind or ideation. It is precisely at this point, in specifying the direct relation between God and the human creature, that one must pass from philosophy to theology. Schleiermacher did indeed suggest that such a relationship exists, but precisely because it is direct and concretely real it is conceptually impure. God is directly present to consciousness, but this presence is inseparable from the awareness of oneself as standing in this relationship.'<sup>308</sup>

The relationship Schleiermacher has in mind is human redemption centred on Jesus Christ. The concrete circumstances of the human consciousness of the relationship are Christianity, which in *The Christian Faith* means evangelical Christianity. The somewhat abstract discussion of the self-consciousness parallels the more concrete discussion of evangelical Reform and piety in the sermons on the Augsburg confession. Together, the realist impulse of Schleiermacher's view of piety sets up an experiential basis for a Reformed doctrine of God emphasising His Omnipotence and the eternal act of election, his purposive action upon the world.

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306. 'But neither an absolute feeling of dependence, *i.e.* without any feeling of freedom in relation to the co-determinant, nor an absolute feeling of freedom, *i.e.* without any feeling of dependence in relation to the co-determinant, is to be found in this whole realm.' 4.2.15. John E. Thiel further explains this connection: 'The order of worldly causality issues from the integrity of proper thinking itself and, for this reason, the Naturzusammenhang is Weltbewusstsein or mediate self-consciousness considered in its widest possible expanse. So considered, the Naturzusammenhang provides pious feeling not only with a legitimate province for its own objectification but also with a historical setting whose limits are defined by proper thinking and which the dogmatist must respect as he plies his trade.' *God and World in Schleiermacher's Dialektik and Glaubenslehre*. p. 206.

307. 'Any proclamation of God which is to be operative upon and within us can only express God in his relation to us; and this is not an infra-human ignorance concerning God, but the essence of human limitedness in relation to Him.' (CF 10.PS.52)

308. *Faith and Ethics: The Theology of H. Richard Niebuhr* p. 36.





## Chapter 6. Schleiermacher on the Doctrine of God

The doctrines associated with creation locate the parameters of Christ's work in the *Glaubenslehre*, even if the doctrines are only completed in the sections describing Christ's person and work. They are both ingredient in and mutually determinative of Christian piety as the end of human piety, viz. the experience of redemption as the completion of creation. For these reasons, and perhaps imitating Calvin's *Institutes*, Schleiermacher splits his doctrinal system into two parts: knowledge of God as Creator (§31-61) and as Redeemer (§62-172).<sup>309</sup> The two divisions both end with treatments of the divine attributes as they relate respectively to creation and to redemption after detailing the experiential basis of each knowledge, bases constantly implying each other. Both sections depend on a common account of human piety and experience developed primarily in the early sections of the *Glaubenslehre* borrowed from various disciplines related to theology. A tension between the two moments remains within the Christian life: 'In the actual life of the Christian... there is no general God-consciousness which has not bound up with it a relation to Christ, and no relationship with the Redeemer which has no bearing on the general God-consciousness.' (CF 62.3.261)

The knowledge of God as Creator, though, is not the result of an 'universal or so-called natural theology,' but is the Christian element 'coincident in expression with those of other faiths.' (CF 29.2.124)<sup>310</sup> Schleiermacher conceptually and textually links these two aspects of piety, relationship with the Redeemer and

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309. B. A. Gerrish *The Old Protestantism and the New* (London: A & C Black, 2004) p. 198.

310. 'If, then, this first element in our proposition does thus belong to Christian piety, because it necessarily appears in combination with the second, we further venture to assert that the two taken together enclose the whole realm of Christian piety.' (CF 29.2.124)

general God-consciousness, through his doctrine of sin, and the divine attributes of Holiness and Justice following on the human experience of sin. Natural, universal, or speculative theology cannot be treated in Christian doctrine as Christian doctrine concerns itself with definite states of mind and these determinations 'belong to the realm of the antithesis in which the sensible self-consciousness moves.' (CF 5.PS. 25)

### *I. The Creator God and His Attributes*

By placing human knowledge of God in the immediate self-consciousness, Schleiermacher calls into question some inherited conceptual strategies for speaking about God, namely the modification of a worldly concept by removing limitations or negations before applying it to God.<sup>311</sup> Instead, Christian talk about God begins with the experience of the undivided causality as that which gives birth to language, 'absolute causality is experienced and presses for expression in diversity of language; [t]he two coincide—the place of experience and the origin of effability.'<sup>312</sup> The experiential basis of human knowledge of God, the warrant for human talk about God, is the feeling of absolute dependence, which remains constant in the Christian life, coming into expression in diverse language despite its unitary source. Differentiations in the feeling of absolute dependence could only have their source in differences within God, who is one.<sup>313</sup>

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311. (CF 50.3.197)

312. Gerhard Ebeling 'Schleiermacher's Doctrine of the Divine Attributes' *Journal for Theology and Church* no. 7 p. 139.

313. 'For if differentiations were assumed in God, even the feeling of absolute dependence could not be treated as such and as always and everywhere the same. For, in that case, there must be differences having their source in something beyond the difference of the life-moments through which the feeling (of dependence) makes its appearance in mind.' (CF 50.2.196)

Schleiermacher's solution to this problem of plural speech about the one God is two-fold and sets up his initial statements concerning the doctrine of God. First, Schleiermacher begins by treating God as Creator responsible for the entirety of the created world and its causality. The created causality of the world depends entirely on God so that no element within the flux of the world can alone be taken in isolation as indicative of who God is. Second, God's creation of the worldly causality, though, does allow for the different moments, and all moments potentially, to express human relations to God. As a result,

*'all attributes which we ascribe to God are to be taken as denoting not something special in God, but only something special in the manner in which the feeling of absolute dependence is to be related to him.'* (CF 50.194)

Attributes are ways of expressing how *human beings* are before God; they indicate limits.

In the remainder of this chapter I will turn to an appreciation of Schleiermacher's doctrine of God as creator and the attributes associated with creation. Beginning with God as creator is important for understanding Schleiermacher's entire project in the *Glaubenslehre* according to Richard Niebuhr:

‘One may translate The Christian Faith into the language of creedal theology by saying that the basal knowledge of God afforded by the religious consciousness is a knowledge of God as creator of all things visible and invisible, and the finite consciousness can never dissolve or abstract from this relationship.’<sup>314</sup>

The relationship established in creation, as one established by God's eternal decree, does not change:

‘In fact, there is only one eternal and universal [*allgemeinen*] decree [*Rathschluß*] of the justification of men for Christ's sake... [and] the decree that sent forth Christ is one with the creation of human generation if in Christ human nature is first accomplished.’ (CG 109.3.197.31-198.4)

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314. Richard R. Niebuhr *Schleiermacher on Christ and Religion* p. 186

As a result, the doctrine of God cannot be given apart from the entire dogmatic system describing God's decree as it is enacted in creation and redemption through the Christian experience of faith.<sup>315</sup>

#### *A. The Doctrine of Creation*

Schleiermacher's doctrine of creation grows out of two points: the origination of all things in God, and the impossibility of placing God '*under those terms* [Bestimmungen] *and antitheses which have arisen in and through the world.*' (CF 40.149-150/CG 40.231.3-4) The first point covers the traditional doctrines of God's creation and preservation of the world. The second treats God's difference from the world *as the world's sole determinant*. The two points belong together in Schleiermacher's presentation as ways of articulating the asymmetrical relationship between God and the world in appropriately unique terms.

The world's existence in absolute dependence on God has been divided into two related church doctrines: creation and preservation.<sup>316</sup> Creation and preservation do not, though, denote two different actions undertaken by God, the distinction comes down from traditional religious teaching without definite dogmatic content. (CF 37.2.143) Schleiermacher points to the original unity of the doctrines in the 'Roman Symbol' with its confession, 'πιστεύω εἰς θεὸν παντοκράτορα' embodying the claim that 'the totality of finite being exists only in dependence upon the Infinite [which] is the complete description of that basis of

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315. '...the doctrine of God, as set forth in the totality of the divine attributes, can only be completed simultaneously with the whole system: whereas it is usually treated continuously and without a break...' (CF 31.2.128)

316. *Der ursprüngliche Ausdruck dieses Verhältnisses, daß nämlich die Welt nur in der schlechthinigen Abhängigkeit von Gott besteht, spaltet sich in der kirchlichen Lehre in die beiden Sätze, daß die Welt von Gott erschaffen ist, und daß Gott die Welt erhält.* (CG 36.218.6-10)

every religious feeling which is here to be set forth.'(CF 36.1.142) The division in the doctrines comes with the evangelical confessions describing God as '*creator et conservator omnium tum visibilium tum invisibilium*,' without, however, expanding creation or preservation into any definite form. (CF 37.144)<sup>317</sup> Schleiermacher retains the division such that taken together they will explain the original, primitive feeling of God as παντοκράτορα. The doctrine of creation will be explained with an eye to clearing out 'alien' elements in the account of absolute dependence, while preservation will explain the experience of absolute dependence and divine causality.

Creation out of nothing is not, for Schleiermacher, a definite concept, but a negative concept setting boundaries on acceptable ways of speaking about creation. Everything that exists must be related to God as its origin so that nothing possesses an independent existence. Creation out of nothing is not an explanation of *how* the world has come into existence, which is the domain of natural science<sup>318</sup>, but a restriction on attempts to offer such explanations

'[N]othing definite is here said about the manner of creation, there is nothing on which to remark in this distinction except the intention that nothing, no point of space and no point of time, should be exempted from the Divine All-Sovereignty... For it is only by describing God as the sole original activity that the relation of absolute dependence can be expressed.' (CF 37.1.144)

Offering an explanation of Creation, a quasi-physical narrative account like the one given in Genesis, would draw God into the antitheses of the created world, and, therefore, make the feeling of *absolute* dependence impossible through an adulteration of God's own independence. Since the feeling of absolute dependence

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317. The quotation is from the first of the Anglican Articles of Religion. Schleiermacher gives references to the Augsburg Confession, Gallican Confession, Scottish Confession, and Hungarian Confession. He cites these texts from the Augusti Corpus.

318. 'Hence the complete separation of these two involves our handing over this subject to natural science, which, carrying its researches backward into time, may lead us back to the forces and masses that formed the world, or even further still.' (CF 40.1.150)

relates to one who has just this sort of sovereignty over the whole world as such. Other theories of creation do not come from the explication of Christian piety, but the satisfaction of intellectual curiosity through speculation.

'And [the negative position] is the [one] given the doctrine, both when it occurs in the New Testament and in all regular Confessions of Faith. Whereas the Old Testament basis of it lies in the beginnings of a history-book which as such chiefly satisfies the desire for knowledge.' (CF 39.1.149)

The doctrine of creation follows the negative strictures imposed on doctrine by the feeling of absolute dependence, i.e. God's not being a thing in the world (CF 4.4.16), and the Reformation commitment to the removal of human precepts, i.e. human speculations unrelated to Christian piety.

#### *B. The Doctrine of Preservation*

The doctrine of Preservation (*Erhaltung*), on the other hand, is the positive expression of the feeling of absolute dependence as the Christian relation to God as creator. Schleiermacher gives a positive view of the doctrine:

*'The pious self-consciousness, by means of which we place all that affects or influences us in absolute dependence on God, coincides entirely with the view that all such things are conditioned and determined by the interdependence of Nature.'* (CF 46.170)

The positive view of preservation, which Schleiermacher prefers to traditional language of providence (*Vorsehung*), (CF 164.3.726) relates all of the finite causality, the internal causes of the world, to the divine causality. (CF 51.200) By considering three aspects of this relation the nature of this doctrine will become clearer: miracles, evil, and human freedom.

The finite, or worldly, causality is made up of the reciprocal, related, and partial causalities of individuals within the world. The nature system (*Naturzusammenhang*) of reciprocal influence depends entirely on the divine

causality, and, in fact, the two 'are one and the same thing simply from different points of view, the one being neither separated from the other nor limited by it.' (CF 46.2.174) The working of the finite causality does not occur apart from the determinant causality of God working out 'the fulfilment of divine decrees' through the powers and forces within the world. (CF 46.PS.175-178) In making this point Schleiermacher jumps ahead somewhat to his conception of the work of the Redeemer in restoring creation and bringing about the Kingdom of God. The completion of creation in the incarnation does not occur in opposition to the eternal decree of God so it cannot be in opposition to the divine causality responsible for the system of nature. Nothing can be thought of as somehow independent of the divine causality, even free or spontaneous actions, requiring divine intervention in the form of miracles or *special divine actions*. The general preservation of the world undertaken by God accounts for all developments within the nature system inhabited by free agents. Schleiermacher illustrates this point by placing human prayer 'under divine preservation so that prayer and its fulfilment or refusal are only part of the original divine plan, and consequently the idea that otherwise something else might have happened is wholly meaningless.' (CF 47.1.180)

If everything is placed under the divine preservation in this way, then the question of the origin of evil will necessarily arise. Schleiermacher, however, reframes the question around the purpose of evil. Whether personal, what Schleiermacher calls 'moral, or social evil,' evil represents the obstacles one encounters in life either through the resistance of nature or the social life. Both of these realms, as parts of the finite causality, are determined by God; evil and good 'are alike rooted in universal dependence on God.' (CF 48.1.185) God is, in a sense, responsible for the resistance human beings encounter as evil, but this resistance



has the purpose of bringing about progress in the Christian life. Evil is a condition of the emergence of the good in the Christian life *by means of the reciprocal influence of the finite causality*.<sup>319</sup> The ordered character of evil, as the resistance of humanity to realising the feeling of absolute dependence, is directed to its overcoming through the means of the finite causality. It is ordained to the purpose of the completion of human nature from within the nature system in restoration or redemption. The existence of evil, and its correlate sin, are from the very beginning ordered to the coming of the Redeeming, 'set in relation to His appearing.' (CF 80.2.328)

Schleiermacher's examination of human freedom also makes use of this pattern. He admits a relative distinction between causes in the system of nature and the free actions of human beings. The only other option he sees would be a total determinism transforming everything into 'appearance' and annihilating the self. (CF 49.1.191) At the same time, distinguishing natural forces from those of free agents as closer to God's causality would undo the uniformity of relation implied in the feeling of absolute dependence.<sup>320</sup> He resolves the problem by relating all aspects of the finite causality, free, bound, human, natural, etc., to the divine causality, 'which is entirely different from that which belongs to the sphere of reciprocal action.' (CF 49.2.192) The pattern relates all finite existence to the divine causality in a way totally distinct from any form of relationship within the finite realm. The oscillation between total identification and purposive engagement is a

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319. 'Nothing remains but on the one hand to attribute the divine co-operation equally to everything that happens, and on the other to maintain that evil as such is not ordained by God, but only as related to the good and as one condition of it.' (CF 48.3.189)

320. 'For this feeling [of absolute dependence] would not retain its uniform character if there were a sphere, i.e. that of natural causes, in which finite and divine causation met... [and] that of mechanical or rather apparent causation where only divine causality reigned and finite causality was absent, and that of free causality where only finite cause reigned and divine causality was absent.' (CF 49.1.191)

necessary feature of Christian theology and piety as they maintain their tensive character.<sup>321</sup> The asymmetrical and non-competitive relationship between divine and finite causality does have a purpose: redemption in Jesus Christ.

Behind the doctrine of creation and or preservation stands the doctrine election: the ordained purpose of creation and preservation. Schleiermacher makes this connection explicit in a polemical work he wrote between the two editions of the *Glaubenslehre* against Lutheran attempts to soften the doctrine of predestination:

'Consequently, on [Schleiermacher's] understanding, namely, that the divine Spirit is active through the Word as a power of nature, nothing is included other than simply a more precise statement of the Calvinian "according as it pleases God" (prout visum est Deo; *Inst.* 3.12.10). This is indeed the case, for it was indeed God's good pleasure from the beginning not to create individual being and life but to create a world, and this is also the way in which the Spirit of God is active, as a world-forming power, and through the Spirit of God there arises not the disorder of individual spiritual life but the spiritual world.'<sup>322</sup>

The attributes of God draw on the feeling of absolute dependence to describe the various experiences of this 'world-forming power' on the pattern that has emerged in the discussion of creation and preservation: multiple reciprocal forces within the world are, without denying their relative difference, referred to God as equally the result of divine causality. The relationship between the terms, however, does not result in a conceptual identity, but an experienced unity at the level of feeling.<sup>323</sup>

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321. [as long as there is no generally accepted formula for the God-world relation when] we begin to speak not of the origin of the world but of its coexistence with god and its relatedness to God, we cannot avoid an oscillation between formulas, on the one hand, which approach to the identification of the two, and formulas, on the other, which go near to putting them in opposition to one another.' (*CF* 46.2.174)

322. *On the Doctrine of Election, with Special Reference to the Aphorisms of Dr. Bretschneider by F. Schleiermacher* trans. Ian G. Nicol and Allen G. Jorgenson (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2012) p. 76. 'Nevertheless, even the most polemical interpreter of Schleiermacher's theological thinking cannot overlook the fact that his statement of the religious situation is not essentially different from that which the Augustinian-Reformed tradition has long since made the Western world familiar.' Niebuhr *Schleiermacher on Christ and Religion* p. 193.

323. 'If we were to pursue this observation further, we should discover that a fundamental feature of Schleiermacher's thought is the endeavour not to allow speculative dominance to the idea of identity, but to turn it to the ultimate distinctions of fundamental theology, such as that

The implied source of this unity of feeling is, as the above quote points to, the Spirit's reconciliation of the world to God in Christ. Apart from Christ's historical appearance, though, this austere non-salvific experience of the Creator is all that is possible

## *II. Divine Attributes*

### *A. Methodological Constraints on the Doctrine of the Divine Attributes*

The unfinished character of human knowledge of God comes into greater focus when Schleiermacher turns to the doctrine of the divine attributes. The attributes express '*not something peculiar [besonderes] in God, but only something peculiar in the manner [Art] in which the feeling of absolute dependence corresponds to Him.* (CF 50.194/ CG 50.300.7-9) They are the result of the inadequacy of simply speaking of a highest or original Being responsible for finite existence; they try to express something of the human experience of God. The origin of the doctrine of the attributes is the hymnic and lyrical use of descriptions of finite existence as analogies trying to 'vivify and establish the simple idea of the Supreme Being [*höchstens Wesens*].' (CF 50.1.194/ CG 50.1.301.7-8) Dogmatic theology, therefore, does not try to combine these attributes into knowledge of God, but works to make sure the feeling of absolute dependence, our experience of God, is the ground of all these various impressions.<sup>324</sup> Grounding the attributes in

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between God and world, between sin and grace.' Ebeling 'Schleiermacher's Doctrine of the Divine Attributes' pp. 158-159.

324. 'Dogmatic Theology, on the other hand, tried more and more to systematise them [representations of attributes], not, if it understood itself rightly, in order to arrive at the consciousness that they contained a complete knowledge [*Erkenntniß*] of God, but only to assure itself that the God-consciousness which dwells in us in all its differentiations and as it realises itself as the prompting of different elements of life, was included in them.' (CF 50.1.195/CG 50.1.302.10-13)

experience in this way places methodological strictures on *what* can be said about God and *how* it can be said.

Schleiermacher gives three traditional ways for *how* we can speak about God: the removal of limits, negation, and causality.<sup>325</sup> The first two methods, which Schleiermacher views as versions of the same method, take a worldly concept, something developed in the mediate self-consciousness, perform an operation on it, i.e. remove finite limitations or negate the concept, and then apply the concept to God.<sup>326</sup> Unsurprisingly, Schleiermacher rejects these views as positing something apart from God that is in turn attributed to God, which would locate some knowledge of God within the flux of finite existence, and made to be the basis of a speculative knowledge of God. The way of causality, though, refers to the experience of the divine causality and the various modifications of feeling coming about as a result.<sup>327</sup> By referring the various attributes to the single divine causality, the attributes are not taken as descriptions of various things about God but as expressions of the diverse human experience of the one divine causality.

The restriction on theological talk also conditions *what* can be said of God.<sup>328</sup> The removal of finite limits and the negation of finite attributes attempt to

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325. Schleiermacher gives them as '*der Weg der Entschränkung, der Verneinung oder Absprechung und der Ursächlichkeit*' with a note, '*via eminentiae negationis et causalitatis*.' (CG 50.3.304.18-20)

326. Using the example of infinity Schleiermacher critiques these ways of speaking in (CF 50.3.196-197)

327. 'If the divine attributes express modulations of the way in which the feeling of absolute dependence is related to God and in which absolute causality comes to consciousness in concrete form, then the systematic structure must be subjected to this criterion. To draw up a complete list of divine attributes with the intention of thereby making it possible to construct a complete knowledge of God from concepts would be at variance with this criterion. The same, of course, applies to a mere statistical stringing together of, say, the biblical attributes of God. Schleiermacher is certainly interested in completeness where content is concerned, because the systematic method exercises an essential function of control over against extraneous instructions.' Ebeling 'Divine Attributes' p. 150.

328. Schleiermacher insists on the maintenance of 'that ineffability of the Divine Being which the Scriptures...recognise so clearly on every page that we need not quote passages.' (CF 50.3.196)

describe God's inner life by speaking of God apart from God's relation to the world so 'that those attributes which express God's relation to the world have the appearance of mere additions and accidents.' (CF 50.4.200) They separate who God is in Himself from who He is in relation to the world, introducing not only composition into God but describing God's inner life in inactive or negative terms.<sup>329</sup> Schleiermacher's procedure does not divide the attributes experienced in the feeling of absolute dependence from the inner vitality or activity of God by taking each attribute as expressive of the divine essence experienced in the feeling of absolute dependence. The attributes do not pick out real differences in God, 'each attribute is then only another expression for the whole Being of God, which remains always the same.' (CF 50.3.199) The basis of this experiential knowledge of God is the comprehensive equality and radical difference of both the divine and finite causality.<sup>330</sup> On Schleiermacher's model, then, the attributes will describe the feeling of absolute dependence, as it is experienced in the finite causality, in such a way that the diverse descriptions will describe the active, unique life of God in itself and in the world without compromising the asymmetrical character of this relationship. The motif of polar, paradoxical identification recurs again in the description of the attributes as descriptions of the God-world relationship. Schleiermacher sums up this view of God's expressive life as 'absolute vitality' [*schlechthinige Lebendigkeit*], which brings together God's inwardness [*Innerlichkeit*] and vitality [*Lebendigkeit*]. (CF 51.2.203/CG 51.2.312.13-14)

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329. '...the result [of these methods] is always a duality in God--a purely inner life in virtue of the inactive attributes, and a life related to the world in virtue of the active attributes.' (CF 50.3.198)

330. 'For the divine causality is only equal in compass to the finite in so far as it is opposite to it in kind, since if it were like it in kind, as it is often represent as being in anthropomorphic ideas of God, it too would belong to the sphere of interaction and thus be a part of the totality of the natural order.' (CF 51.1.201-202)

Gerhard Ebeling describes Schleiermacher's motivations in his methodological constraints on the discussion of the attributes: "What Schleiermacher has in view in all this is unquestionably the central biblical description of God as the living God."<sup>331</sup>

With these constraints in mind, Schleiermacher turns to his positive treatment of the divine attributes. As with the doctrines of creation and preservation, the traditional view of the attributes is subjected to criticism on the basis of the feeling of absolute dependence as the felt ground of the doctrines themselves. The revisions, moreover, maintain the same commitment to God's total purposive action in the creation and redemption of the world. The attributes treated at this point will, for that reason, find their counterparts in the attributes treated in relation to sin and redemption: holiness, justice, love, and wisdom. These pairs conform to the two-fold structure of God's inwardness and vitality, his self-derived, asymmetrical expression of love in the world. Although Schleiermacher lists four attributes at this point, eternity, omnipresence, omnipotence, and omniscience, they can actually be reduced to two: eternity and omnipotence.<sup>332</sup> Eternity, with omnipresence as its correlate, emphasises God's distinction from the finite world in his presence to it and so falls on the side of God's inwardness. Omnipotence, with omniscience as its accompaniment, on the other hand, stresses God's presence in the context of the finite causality and so it manifests a sense of God's expressive vitality. Taken together they illustrate the tension necessary in any picture of God's

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331. Ebeling 'Divine Attributes' p. 142

332. 'The divine causality as equivalent in compass to the sum-total of the natural order is expressed in the term, the divine *omnipotence*; this puts the whole of finite being under the divine causality. The divine causality as opposed to the finite and natural is expressed in the term, the divine *eternity*.' (CF 51.1.201)

life in himself and with the world, which is the same life, within the constraints imposed by Schleiermacher's vision of evangelical theology.

*B. Eternity and Omnipresence*<sup>333</sup>

Attributing eternity and omnipresence to God right away raises the problem of conceptualising an attribute on the basis of a negation of some finite property, a procedure Schleiermacher has criticised and abandoned. The temptation especially arises to ascribe the attributes in this way because the attributes are not usually taken as active.<sup>334</sup> So, for instance, God's eternity will be thought of in terms of his existence before time, but this is to think in the 'sphere of a comparison of more or less...made between similars.' (CF 52.1.204) Duration of time and extension in space, however, only take place within the created causality that depends entirely on God. A more considered view of the attributes would remove them from time and space either by removing the limits, by denying a temporal beginning and end (CF 52.2.205) or positing an infinite extension (CF 53.2.209), but these views end up not affirming anything positive about God at all or equating an attribute with an aspect of finite existence. 'We must therefore reject as inadequate all those explanations which abrogate for God only the limits of time [and space as well] and not time [and space] itself, and would form eternity from time by removal of limits, while in fact these are opposites.' (CF 52.2.205) As Schleiermacher has pointed out repeatedly up to this point in the *Glaubenslehre*, God's difference from

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333. '...the idea of omnipresence, indeed, is only taken up here because the contrast between the divine causality and the finite in the term eternity has been predominantly referred to time. It seems unnecessary then to do more than to carry over in the same form everything belonging to the former proposition, changing time into space.' (CF 52.1.206-207)

334. 'If the eternity of God be separated from His omnipotence, which is here confined to its special relation to eternity, it becomes only a so-called 'inactive' attribute; and thus is often described as infinity or immeasurability applied to time.' (CF 52.1.203)

the world is different than any relationship or opposition within the world. Uniquely, he differs differently.

Making a positive move, Schleiermacher links the attributes to God's omnipotence and makes them a divine activity: 'in that a divine activity is posited, something may be posited, unknown indeed and perhaps not clearly conceivable, but by no means simply nothing.' (CF 52.2.205) The not 'simply nothing' of divine eternity does not become conceivable, but describes God as the source of *our experience of time* without Himself being in time.<sup>335</sup> The human experience of time, human feeling as temporally experienced, is finite experience of God's creative and preservative act in a temporal modulation. Schleiermacher's non-speculative method rooted in the feeling of absolute dependence transforms the doctrines of God's eternity and omnipresence from negative attributes of God in Himself to positive attributes related to God's responsibility for the existence of time and space. The attributes are, then, ways of attributing features of the created world to God 'as the enduring causal ground relatively to the changing caused' without being able to give a definitive account of either the ground or nature of the causes. (CF 52.2.206)

In the case of eternity, Schleiermacher's positive illustration of his point is the phenomenon of a subject remaining identical throughout its changing states. Feeling, when taken as consciousness as such, endures throughout the different physical, mental, and spiritual states of a human life in a way similar to God's endurance of the various modulations of the finite causality. The finite being

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335. 'Theologically still more profound is the corresponding interpretation of eternity as divine causality.[*Gl.* 52, Thesis (I, 267)] The two misinterpretations of eternity--as boundless time[*Gl.* 52,2], and as a timelessness that has no relation to time[*Gl.* 52,2],--are surmounted by understanding eternity as once again a modulation of divine causality--namely, as the constitutive condition not only of all temporal things but of time itself.' Ebeling 'Divine Attributes' p. 144.



perduring through time is a 'kind of analogical point of contact [*analogischen Anknüpfungspunkt*]' between God and finite being. (CF 52.2.206/CG 52.2.316.24) The two poles in this point of contact cannot, however, be equated with each other or compared at the structural level beyond this one point because of a deep fundamental difference. The relationship between God and finite being comes to expression in the radically asymmetrical correlation of absolute causality and absolute dependence, structurally determinative aspects of both. God's perdurance as eternal and timeless ground negates any need for a separate doctrine of God's unchangeability: 'it is already contained in the idea of eternity.' (CF 52.PS.206) Schleiermacher preserves it as rule not to interpret any religious emotion as if it indicated a change in God.<sup>336</sup>

Omnipresence is, also, easily thought in terms of comparison with the finite spatial order. 'For when there is space-filling, we cannot get away from the analogy with expansive forces, and then the notion of an infinite extension to be predicated of God lies too near.' (CF 53.2.209) Descriptions of God as outside of all things, besides all things, and including all things in Himself all think spatially parallel to talk of eternity as time without beginning or end. God including all things within himself might be an improvement, but it fatally tends in an inactive direction. The best definition of God's omnipresence, especially when it stresses God's inwardness, is 'the formula that God is in Himself;<sup>337</sup> but, of course, along with this it must be asserted that 'the effects of His causal being-in-Himself are everywhere.' (CF 53.2.209) This Augustinian definition, in himself all together everywhere,

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336. Schleiermacher lists Exodus 32:14, Jeremiah 26:13, and Jeremiah 42:10 as examples of God changing making clear his willingness to 'correct' the Old Testament when it is in conflict with Christian piety.

337. Schleiermacher cites Augustine as the source of this definition: 'Augustine, *Ep.* 187, 14: *Nullus contentus loco, sed in se ipse ubique totus.*'

follows the pattern of keeping God's inwardness and vitality in tension as a means of affirming the omnipresent feeling absolute dependence, the asymmetrical dependence of creation on God.

### *C. Omnipotence and Omniscience*

Omnipotence and Omniscience follow more directly from God's vitality and to an extent mirror the doctrine of preservation. As has been repeatedly established already, omnipotence and omniscience must be constructed so that the absolute and finite causality cohere in distinction *and* are not subject to the conditions of finite, reciprocal, and contrasting existence. Within those parameters Schleiermacher articulates these doctrines with three positive results: God causes everything, knows everything, and does so in a single omnipotent act.

Every relative cause and effect takes place within the finite causal system, a system that depends entirely on God, and God is equally the cause of all these things. The experiential basis of this doctrine is the fact that the feeling of absolute dependence relates all of finite existence to God in its total receptivity. The coherence of the divine and finite causality<sup>338</sup> manifests itself in the correspondence of the natural order of causes and God's omnipotent ordering of those causes.(*CF* 54.1.212)<sup>339</sup> Schleiermacher's revision of the doctrine of omnipotence, then, refuses a view of omnipotence as the ability to effect anything

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338. *'In the conception of divine Omnipotence two ideas are contained: first, that the entire system of Nature, comprehending all times and spaces, is founded upon divine causality, which as eternal and omnipresent, is in contrast with all finite causality; and second, that the divine causality, as affirmed in our feeling of absolute dependence, is completely presented in the totality of finite being, and consequently everything for which there is a causality in God happens and becomes real.'* (*CF* 54.211)

339. *'Rather everything is and becomes altogether by means of the natural order, so that each takes place through all and all wholly through the divine omnipotence, so that all in divisibly exists through the One.'*

or to intervene within finite causes. Those views of omnipotence would imply deliberation in God, and, therefore, both temporal duration as well as reciprocity.

'[W]e only come to the idea of divine omnipotence through the conception of the feeling of absolute dependence, and we lack any point of connexion for making demands upon the divine causality which extend beyond the natural order embraced by this feeling.' (CF 54.2.212-213)

As the cause of all things, God knows all things in a way appropriate to his relation to the finite world. God's knowledge is not, therefore, discursive or reactive, but creative and causative: 'it is quite correct to say, as has been said in multifarious ways, that everything exists by reason of God speaking or thinking it.' (CF 55.1.221)<sup>340</sup> Divine knowledge, as creative knowledge in creation and preservation, works for a purpose totally determined by God who executes this wisdom perfectly, without the influence of any alien power. (CF 55.1.221) Omnipotence and omniscience come together to affirm reality as the working out of God's wisdom, a fact practically learned in the experience of a prayer remaining unanswered or disappointed expectations as opportunities for 'true religious submission.' (CF 55.2.226)<sup>341</sup> Like all the doctrines considered they point to a reconciliation of human beings with the world as it is, a real receptivity.

The doctrines considered so far all circle around the coming doctrine of redemption and the person of the Redeemer, Jesus of Nazareth. God's wisdom in creating the world includes the coming of Christ as the means of effecting Redemption in the world, a determined rather than reactive means. Schleiermacher has attempted to adhere to this fact by building his doctrines around the particular circumstances of human beings as the place where God is known; the

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340. See also 'Therefore, just as the divine will must not be thought of as a faculty of desire, so the divine will must not be thought of as a faculty of desire, so the divine omniscience must not be considered as a perceiving or experiencing, a thinking together or a viewing together.' (CF 55.1.220)

341. Compare with the similar point at (CF 47.1.180)

circumstances *felt* by human beings, the world of their *Gefühl*, are the result of God's causative wisdom that is ordered to the working out of redemption in Jesus Christ.<sup>342</sup> The principle grounding the finite causality is the one who sends Christ into the world, something Christians have experienced in their own lives, and so up until this point Schleiermacher has been treating only what is presupposed in that experience, but is made known only in Jesus Christ.<sup>343</sup> The concrete circumstances where the Redeemer is known are the Christian church.<sup>344</sup> Schleiermacher, without attempting a *conceptual* resolution of these issues, sees the relationship between human circumstances, the being of God, and the coming of the Redeemer as one:

'Just as little, however, can we think of God's willing Himself, and God's willing the world, as separated the one from the other. For if He wills Himself, He wills Himself as Creator and Sustainer, so that in willing Himself willing the world is already included; and if He wills the world, in it He wills His eternal and ever-present omnipotence, wherein willing Himself is included; that is to say, the necessary will is included in the free, and the free in the necessary.' (CF 54.4.217)

### III. Sin

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342. 'The creative power of God, however, does not merely manifest itself in Christ; it becomes productive in him and through him, ramifying outward from him through his communicating and imparting of himself to others, in alliance with the Spirit.' Niebuhr *Schleiermacher on Christ and Religion* p. 226. and 'Creation-faith is misconstrued, therefore, if it is interpreted as confidence in the *principle* of order. It is rather an attitude of resignation, assent and confidence in the *particular* order that converges on one's own vein, specifies one's identity before God, and gives one a sense of being a part of the original plan of creation.' Niebuhr *Schleiermacher on Christ and Religion* p. 245.

343. 'The immediate feeling of absolute dependence is presupposed and actually contained in every pious Christian self-consciousness as the only way in which, in general, our own being and the infinite Being of God can be in one self-consciousness.' (CF 32.131)

344. 'Our proposition says nothing of any intermediate link between faith and participation in the Christian communion, and is accordingly to be taken as directly combining to two, so that faith of itself carries with that participation; and not only as depending on the spontaneous activity of the man who has become a believer, but also as depending on the spontaneous activity of the communion, as the source from which the testimony proceeded for the awakening of faith.' (CF 14.PS.70-71)

*The Christian Faith* pivots on this doctrine of sin as it moves from an abstracted discussion of human God-consciousness, the feeling of absolute dependence, to the more concrete experience of redemption in the Redeemer. The Redeemer, Jesus Christ, effects the redemption of the Christian believer prevented from enjoying the God-consciousness because of sin. Sin, therefore, provides the ground in the believer for his or her vital receptive interaction with Christ as the Redeemer, a status Christ possesses at least partially in virtue of his sinlessness. Just as the section on dependence began with the human experience of relative freedom and dependence, the Christological divisions of the *Glaubenslehre* begin with the human experience of sin in light of the redemption communicated by Jesus Christ. The experience of sin grounds the character of redemption in believers, as freedom from sin's bondage, as well as provides the descriptive means of conceptualising Christ's own life as the one effecting freedom from sin's bondage. Christian believers are freed *from* sin on the basis of Christ's sinlessness. Christ's sinlessness, as it is communicated in redemption, in turn leads the believer to understand God's real existence in Christ *as a specific man*. The effects of redemption in the human life will supply the warrant for a proper doctrine of Christ's person, i.e. God incarnate. Practically speaking I will emphasise Schleiermacher's revisionary doctrine of sin as humanity's dominance by its 'sensual element.' The doctrine of sin will point to increasingly purposive divine attributes, holiness and justice, expressing God's intention in creation, which remains unrealised until the coming of the Redeemer in Jesus Christ.

Schleiermacher lays out his doctrine of sin in relation to four *foci*: personal sin, original sin and the original perfection of the world, human suffering, and God's holiness and justice. Personal sin is the experiential base of the remaining

foci as an experience of human ineffectiveness and constraint. The negative picture of humanity's lack of God-consciousness, our refusal to be absolutely dependent, forms a counter-image to Christ's own sinlessness and perfect God-consciousness. Original sin and the original perfection of the world set up the necessity of Christ's 'supernatural' entrance into the world, a world whose lack stems from the single divine decree rather than a Manichaean pollution or spoiling of creation. Human suffering in turn explains the visible effects of sin in the world without, again, invalidating the completion of the world. Furthermore, it will give Schleiermacher a way of explaining Christ's suffering as unconnected with *his* sin and, yet, allow this suffering to be in some sense salvific. Finally, the divine attributes of holiness and justice set the constraints on human life Jesus Christ will fulfil on behalf of humanity. Together these different foci set up the necessary interpretative material for the morally, rather than metaphysically, centred revisionist doctrine of Christ's person in Schleiermacher's *Glaubenslehre*.

#### *A. Personal Sin*

The God-consciousness comes into human life as the 'actual content of a moment of experience only under the general form of self-consciousness, *i.e.* the antithesis of delight and aversion' so that religious consciousness oscillates between the different moments of human self-consciousness relatively determined by some outside source. (CF 62.259/CG 62.391.6-9)<sup>345</sup> The oscillation can be described as turning towards or away from God in light of the Redeemer, and any description of the feeling of absolute dependence without this antithesis between

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345. Translation has been altered here. '*Das bisher beschriebene Gottesbewußtsein kommt als wirkliche Erfüllung eines Momentes nur vor unter der allgemeinen Form des Selbstbewußtseins, nämlich dem Gegensatz von Lust und Unlust.*' The Mackintosh translation gives '*Lust und Unlust*' as 'pleasure and pain.'

delight and aversion will thus be false.<sup>346</sup> By aversion or pain [*Unlust*], here at least, Schleiermacher intends human alienation from God originating from the human self, which is sin; by pleasure, fellowship with God, 'which we call Grace.' (CF 63.262) The feeling of absolute dependence, in other words, remains in a kind of bondage as long as we attempt to bring it out through personal exertion rather than receiving it from Christ, taking it as grace.<sup>347</sup> Christ's continued influence grounded in his person must remain active as a vital and inward power turning outward.

The inability to bring about the God-consciousness in a human self-consciousness by the human person's own efforts is, for Schleiermacher, conceived of as 'a positive antagonism of the flesh against the spirit.' (CF 66.271) The spirit, taken as the 'higher' functions of the soul should determine the human consciousness allowing the God-consciousness to determine the way the self interacts with the world. At this point in the *Glaubenslehre*, Schleiermacher does not pick up his earlier anthropology of feeling, thinking, and doing, but begins to use more and more the language of traditional Christian doctrine. However, his explanation of sin as 'an arrestment of the determinative power of the spirit, due to the independence of the sensuous functions' can be taken as an inappropriate relation of feeling to the world due to the domination of the self by a moment of

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346. 'Everything related to the Redeemer in the religious consciousness of the Christian is peculiar to the distinctively Christian articulation of the antithesis under discussion. No proposition, as we have already said, describing the feeling of absolute dependence apart from this antithesis, can be a description of the religious moment in its entire content, for in every such moment that feeling occurs only as a relative turning away from God or turning towards Him... In the actual life of a Christian, therefore, the two are always found in combination: there is no general God-consciousness which has not bound up with it a relation to Christ, and no relationship with the Redeemer which has no bearing on the general God-consciousness.' CF 62.3 p. 261.

347. 'The description [of Christian piety] given here, however, is identical with the general exposition put forward above [i.e. 11.2-3] For if the feeling of absolute dependence, which was previously in bondage, has been set free only by redemption, the facility with which we are able to graft the God-consciousness on the various sensuous excitations of our self-consciousness also springs solely from the facts of redemption, and is therefore a communicated facility.' (CF 63.2.263)

self-consciousness, thinking or doing, related to the sensuous world of relative dependence and freedom.<sup>348</sup> The self does not take whatever moment it is presented with as related to and a participant in the larger work of God's creation, i.e. does not take itself or the moment as absolutely dependent but asserts its 'absolute' freedom or becomes unduly bound and dependent on something other than God. Human beings, inasmuch as they are sinful, are not conscious of God's determinative role in whatever moment they are faced with, although this determination is always in fact the case.

A breakdown in or lack of the feeling of total dependence comes about, then, as a result of actual circumstances *and* misguided doing and acting. The time and place exert an influence on the person who sins, but the person in turn really does sin of his or her own volition. So Schleiermacher sees sin as *our human consciousness* of our place in the world when God's determination of that world has failed to adequately direct our feeling: 'We are conscious of sin as the force [*Kraft*] and work of a time in which the direction [*Richtung*] of the God-consciousness had not yet emerged.' (CF 67.273/ CG 67.409.1-3) A failure at this level of feeling, in our immediate consciousness determined by our place in the world, will result in compromised thought and action in relation to the reality of the world and God.

Human dependence fails to be truly absolute dependence, is improperly bound to some object, because of the ill-formed dependence cultivated in the

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348. 'This explanation of sin as an arrestment of the determinative power of the spirit, due to the independence of the sensuous functions, is certainly reconcilable with those explanations which describe sin as a turning away from the Creator, though less so with those which interpret sin a violation of the divine law.' (CF 66.2.273) Compare with 'If, then, it is our primary object to ascertain the characteristic element in the consciousness of sinfulness, we ought not, within the sphere of Christian piety, to look for it except in the relationship to the God-consciousness, and accordingly the only course open to us is to reckon everything as sin that has arrested the free development of the God-consciousness.' (CF 66.1.271)



person in his or her historical circumstances. Personal sin relates to way feeling receives its determination from the world around it in an inadequate way. The concrete circumstances leading a human person to be attuned in this way or that way to the surroundings can and do inhibit the emergence of the God-consciousness in the believer. This inadequate attunement comes about from the actual lived situation of the believer (another reminder that feeling does proceed from meaningful, specific, worldly moments), which is what Schleiermacher means by the domination of the higher part of the self, the immediate self-consciousness or feeling, by the lower or sensuous part of the self. Self-consciousness, however, cannot work itself out of this historically determined circumstance by an act of assertion, but can be free only through a proper receptivity at the level of feeling. In more doctrinal terms, sin should not be thought of as transgression of a law but 'as a turning away from the Creator,' a denial of God's character as creator of this world with its own objective character. At the same time this personal denial of the creator comes about through human relation to the larger concrete circumstances affecting human attunement to those concrete circumstances.<sup>349</sup> In sin something other than the creator God becomes the attempted object of absolute human dependence *and* the structuring ground of human life. Sinful thoughts and actions are inadequately monotheistic and must be righted from without.

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349. 'Hence in virtue of this dependence of the specific constitution of the individual life upon a larger common type, as also of the later generations upon the earlier, the sin of the individual has its source in something beyond and prior to its own existence. hence it is just the same even if such differences are held not to be innate, but to be due to education alone, since the type of education itself is determined by proclivities and experiences which precede in time of the learner.' (CF 69.1.279)

The reason for this inability stems from the historically situated human self's dependence on the earlier generation: the sin of the individual has its source in something beyond and prior to its own existence.

'Hence it is just the same even if such differences are held not to be innate, but to be due to education alone, since the type of education itself is determined by proclivities and experiences which precede in time of the learner.' (CF 69.1.279)

Personal, actual sin must be traced back to something prior to the self-consciousness, which does not make itself, and so Schleiermacher turns to original sin.

### *B. Original Sin*

Schleiermacher takes the exterior determination of the self-consciousness away from the God-consciousness to be the meaning of original sin:

'the sinfulness that is present in an individual prior to any action of his own, and has its ground outside his own being, is in every case a complete incapacity for good, which can be removed only by the influence of the Redeemer.' (CF 70.282)

Original sin is a corollary of the fact that in Christian piety everything having to do with redemption relates to the antithesis of pain and pleasure, which Schleiermacher now gives—reveals—as sin and grace.<sup>350</sup> As above, these states come about as a result of human self-consciousness relating to its circumstances in feeling as the basis for its outward works of thinking and doing. The relationship of the self whereby it receives its possibility for thinking and action is the domain of the doctrine of original sin. Two aspects of this relationship are feeling's

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350. 'Hence as Christian piety traces everything at all connected with the God-consciousness either to sin or to grace, everything in our inner states that is not sin must be attributed to our share in redemption, and this redemption must be regarded as the only thing that can removed the incapacity referred to.' (CF 70.1.283)

determination by the natural world, i.e. its inherent capacities, and the possibilities made available to it in its social life. I take up the latter first.

Original sin exists in the human person prior to any action or thought he or she undertakes.<sup>351</sup> The disposition of the God-consciousness in the human person has been adulterated to such a degree, even without actual sin coming into play, that it 'must be wholly incapable not only of developing, but even of consciously aspiring to, such inner states as would harmonise with the proper aim and object of the said disposition.' (CF 70.1.282-283) This is so because the self-consciousness does not create itself, but brings itself about through a complex negotiation of the various communities within which it exists. These social circumstances, though, are not geared toward the God-consciousness. They exist to further the self-interest of the group's 'own selfish interest or love of honour—and these are again but self-love.' (CF 70.3.285) Members of a group become attuned to their circumstances in the service of this limited view, rather than the more general relation of the God-consciousness, producing actual sin through mistaken thought and action. Their misplaced desire is necessarily related to a 'positive obscuration' of the God-consciousness among members of the group. 'We cannot separate the two, for the one ever evokes the other; thus when in any social group, some definite form of appetite breaks out predominantly, it is presently followed by a transformation of the God-consciousness as a means of cloaking the discordance.' (CF 74.2.308)<sup>352</sup>

While Schleiermacher does engage with the idea of tracing original sin back to Adam and Eve, he ultimately dismisses the idea that original sin begins with

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351. 'This idea of a sinfulness present from the first in every human being is in perfect accord with what was set forth above.' (CF §70 ET p. 282)

352. Schleiermacher quotes from the *Apology for the Augsburg Confession*: 'original sin is ignorance in mind and covetousness in the flesh. He is actually citing Melancthon's quotation of Hugh of St. Victor: *Apol. Conf.* i. 'Originale peccatum est ignorantia in mente et concupiscentia in carne.' (CF 74.2.308) His biblical citation is Romans 1.21-26.

Adam. Instead, original sin must have been present in Adam from the very beginning since he eventually sinned in actuality, which would have been impossible if he enjoyed the complete God-consciousness. Adam and Eve were in the same situation as present day human beings, 'innate sinfulness was something native to the first pair.' (CF 72.5.301) The narrative of the Fall is illustrative of a universal process in human life apart from the God-consciousness communicated by the Redeemer.<sup>353</sup> Sin, original and actual, does not destroy human nature as such, but comes about through the incomplete development of human persons in light of the historical communities they themselves develop in and in turn hand over: 'the collective sin of each generation is in turn originating with respect to the sinfulness of the succeeding one...' (CF 72.6.304) The historical nature of sin will become very important for Schleiermacher when he turns to God's incarnation in Christ where the historical situation of his birth *will be insufficient to account for his sinless existence*.

The historical nature of original sin also allows Schleiermacher to position sin within the single decree structure underlying *The Christian Faith*. Sin has been ordained by God not for itself, but 'on the contrary, the very statement that the Redeemer appeared when the fullness of the time was come makes it quite clear that from the beginning everything had been set in relation to His appearing.' (CF 80.2.328) The incarnation will take place as the completion of creation rather than the reparation of a breached created order; the system is supralapsarian in the highest degree.<sup>354</sup> Two related consequences follow from the single decree,

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353. 'Without encroaching upon the work of exegesis or criticism, however, we can use the story, as the early theologians did, in illustration of the universal process of the rise of sin as something always and everywhere the same, and it is in this illustrative quality that, for us, the universal significance of the narrative resides.' (CF 72.5.303)

354. Edwin Chr. van Driel has, therefore, accurately labelled Schleiermacher's Christology and theology in general as supralapsarian in *Incarnation Anyway* ch. 2. Despite the accuracy of this

supralapsarian structure of Schleiermacher's theological system. First, the perfection [*Vollkommenheit*] of the world is such that it can sufficiently determine 'the receptivity of man to the awakening and shaping of self-activity,' or, put differently, the human body successfully mediates the material world and the human spirit to each other. (CF 59.1.238/CG 59.1.364.7-12) The created world is the place where humanity is capable of receiving influences and adequately expressing itself in the world.<sup>355</sup> Second, sin does not vitiate the human person so much 'as would involve the denial of man's capacity to appropriate redemption, for that capacity is the very least that be predicated of that disposition to the God-consciousness which is inherent in man's original perfection.' (CF 70.2.283) Just as it is, humanity is capable of receiving grace through the Redeemer without acquiring a sixth sense or supra-human form of existence. As will be seen, the solution to the historical problem of sin will also be historical, Jesus of Nazareth.

### *C. Suffering*

By impeding the development of the God-consciousness, sin brings about a kind of pain opposed to blessedness best thought of, according to Schleiermacher, as evil. Evil is 'the corporate suffering of the race' as a result of its corporate act of sin. (CF 75.3.317) Certain sorts of evil, though, can be thought of as natural evils that do not relate directly to human sinfulness, but operate as 'incentives to bring these forces more fully under human control.' (CF 75.3.317) Evil plays a

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label, I have serious reservations about much of van Driel's work on Schleiermacher. He follows Catherine Kelsey's reading of Christ as example rather than effective agent in Schleiermacher's theology in her *Thinking about Christ with Schleiermacher*. As I will eventually make clear, this position does not do justice to the fact that Schleiermacher wants to affirm the divinity of Christ even at the cost of breaking the traditional model of the Trinity.

355. 'So, then, the two together are one: the knowability of existence is the ideal side of the original perfection of the world, and the natural subsistence of the human organism is the real side of the same perfection as related to human receptivity.' (CF 59.1.239)

developmental role in the scheme of redemption by providing the resistance necessary for the spirit, or higher part of the self, to gain dominance over the sensuous part of the self. One of Schleiermacher's examples of this interpretation of evil is human mortality. Human beings cannot avoid death by willing it or not willing it. The God-consciousness could, therefore, accept death as part of its dependence on God. Death itself is not inherently evil or a source of human bondage, but the fear of death is a refusal to see God at work in it. (CF 75.1.316) As sinners who lack the God-consciousness, humans encounter death as a frustration of their desire to possess the God-consciousness completely and it is evil in this way.

The relationship between sin and evil, however, does not bring about an exact correspondence between personal sin and the specific suffering people endure, an apparently erroneous and dangerous point of view 'deeply rooted in Judaism and Greek heathenism.' (CF 77.2.321) Everyone suffers evil as the result of sin without, however, suffering as a result of their specific sins. The obscure relationship between sin and suffering sets up Christ's ability, despite his sinlessness, to suffer on behalf of others, which bans any proportional relationship between sin and suffering.

'How indeed could such a supposition be squared with the idea—an idea pervading the New Testament, and, if rightly understood essential to Christianity—that within a common sphere of sin it is possible for one to suffer for the rest, so that the evil due to the sin of many may all converge upon one, and that penal suffering may fall pre-eminently upon one who is himself most free from the common guilt and most resolute in his battle with sin?' (CF 77.2.322)

#### *D. God's Holiness and Justice*

As I noted above, Christian doctrines relate to God's divine causality as it is experienced as the finite causality of creation. Distinct Christian experiences

refer back to God's worldly activity so as to allow talk of his attributes in a heuristic way. 'All attributes which we ascribe to God are to be taken as denoting not something special in God, but only something special in the manner in which the feeling of absolute dependence is to be related to him.' (CF 50) The feeling of absolute dependence modulates in the experience of sin in such a way as to require talk of the divine attributes of holiness and justice. The attributes abstract from the lived experiences already described above, therefore, they can be treated quickly as distillations of those experiences.

'By holiness of God we understand that divine causality through which in all corporate human life conscience [*Gewissen*] is found conjoined with the need of redemption.' (CF 83.341/CG 83.511.16) The holiness of God corresponds to the human experience of having a conscience. Every doing that comes about as a result of the God-consciousness, i.e. which is conditioned by the feeling of absolute dependence, is constrained by moral demands, 'not indeed theoretically, but asserting themselves in our self-consciousness in such a way that any deviation...is apprehended as a hindrance of life, and therefore as sin.' (CF 83.1.341) Conscience, the work of God's holiness, does not conflict with the moral demands of a given society, or should not in an Evangelical church, but is the result of the divine causality bringing about human action.<sup>356</sup> Conscience is not, however, only a Christian phenomena but is present in all people inasmuch as the need for redemption, the purpose of conscience, is present in all people. Given that redemption is social, conscience too pushes into the social realm to establish a stable law 'finding outward expression in civil law.' Holiness is God's causality as

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356. 'In the Evangelical Church, however, we are not troubled with such conflict, for there it is readily admitted that the modes of action emanating from our God-consciousness are identical with those developed from the idea of the good.' (CF 83.1.342)

it brings about the laws of human societies constraining evil for the purpose of redemption.

The justice of God is the other side of the same process whereby God brings about moral awareness in human beings through their social contexts. Holiness points to a positive ordering of human action while 'the justice of God is that divine causality through which in the state of universal sinfulness there is ordained a connexion between evil and actual sin.' (CF 84.345) To reiterate, the connection is not between individual acts of sin and suffering, but between social sin and communal suffering of its results. Punishment of human beings for the purpose of reform is relative to the 'dispensation of redemption' and requires the appearance of redemption to make sense. (CF 84.3.351) At this point in the *Glaubenslehre*, Schleiermacher seems to be alluding to his earlier point concerning the need to relate corporate sinfulness and suffering, i.e. so that Christ can bear the penalty on behalf of others. Justice in the form of the bearing of suffering for sins *as a historical phenomena* points to the incarnation of God in Jesus of Nazareth. The historical, cultural, and political development is providentially ordained by the divine causality towards his coming.





## Chapter 7. Schleiermacher on Christ's Person and Work

This chapter will discuss Schleiermacher's Christology in two parts: Christ's person and work. Following Schleiermacher's own division, I will begin with Christ's person before moving on to explain the work he does in relation to the believer.<sup>357</sup> The heuristic division into person and work follows the basic structure of the *Glaubenslehre* by beginning with God's absoluteness before moving on to his outward vitality. It also properly privileges the establishment of the God-consciousness in Christ *before* describing its communication in Christ's work. This structure tries to maintain God's sovereign priority and asymmetrical relationship to creation without compromising the experiential base of Christian doctrine. At this point in Schleiermacher's system, he begins to pivot towards the saving force of God in Christ, the touch of God on the believer, in order to approach the pragmatic reconstruction of the believer and her thought. Because of Christ's life, the dislocation of sin preventing the emergence of the God-consciousness in human feeling begins to be overturned as she realigns herself with God, surrenders her will to his formative power. Here is the moment of change in the dynamic of Christian piety.

### *I. Incarnation and Monotheism*

If, in the Christian life, for Schleiermacher,

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357. Schleiermacher also makes use of the threefold division of Prophet, Priest, and King to describe Christ's work. I have left them out, for the most part, of my discussion here in order to include them in the next section.

'there is no general God-consciousness which has not bound up with it a relation to Christ, and no relationship with the Redeemer which has no bearing on the general God-consciousness'

then the transition from sin to blessedness will impinge on both as they mutually relate to the Christian's self-consciousness. (*CF* 62.3.261) The relationship with the Redeemer imparts a definite and concrete character to Christian piety in continuity with the Creator-creature relationship described under the rubric of the feeling of absolute dependence. Christian piety's oscillation between these factors forbids any account of it privileging one side over the other but links them concretely in the continuity of the single decree of creation and redemption. Put differently, the monotheistic Christian God-consciousness comes into view with the work of the Redeemer, but the work of the Redeemer is precisely to effect the actualisation of a monotheistic God-consciousness in the redeemed. If this balance falters one will have either, if the Redeemer is ignored, a non-Christian 'meagre and purely monotheistic God-consciousness' or, if the God-consciousness falls away, a personal relation disconnected from the rest of reality, which 'would not belong to the sphere of religion at all.' (*CF* 62.3.262)

The monotheistic nature of Christianity and its belief in the divinity of the Redeemer and the Spirit lead Schleiermacher to place Christian faith somewhere between Judaism and paganism. The reality of the divine being existing in Jesus Christ, and not simply visiting him for a time, from its beginning forced Christian piety to express its awareness of the being of God in Christ in the poetic language of hymns and preaching and to make use of the more abstract language at hand in the various contexts where this faith was coming to expression.<sup>358</sup> The divine being

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358. 'In this way did Christianity take a middle place between Judaism and Paganism; inasmuch as the multiplication of gods is appropriately Pagan; while the denial of all distinction or difference in the Godhead, and especially of that by which it exists in a peculiar manner in Christ, is of Jewish origin, and is appropriately a Jewish rejection of the Son. Such a view of the

in Christ formed the language of Christian piety as it spoke in hymns, sermons, sacraments, and reflective doctrines, but this being was not, in fact could not be, a function of the language. As with the relationship of creatures to God, the realism of the relationship of God to humanity in Christ necessitates its conceptual impurity.<sup>359</sup>

As the historical source of redemption, Christ undoes the effects of original sin from within the sinful world, or, to say the same thing for Schleiermacher, Christ completes the act of creation. This experience of redemption mimics the determination of feeling by sensual self-consciousness in sin, except feeling is now determined by the communication of Christ's blessedness. This will only be possible if believers can truly describe Christ as God incarnate in *this man*.<sup>360</sup> The single decree of creation and justification for Christ's sake places Christ in an utterly unique place in relation to both creation and justification.<sup>361</sup> As a human person, Christ at all times relates to the world in God's sovereign purposive act to bring about its redemption. The union of divine and human activity in Christ necessitates a distinctive way of being in the world that he communicates to Christians as the principle of their own sanctified action. Christ's act eventually passes over into Christian action as the being of God in believers, the Spirit.

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Saviour as divine is developed so frequently in the writings of the fathers since the Council of Nice, that it would be altogether superfluous to prove it here by the citation of particular passages.' 'On the Discrepancy between the Sabellian and Athanasian Method of Representing the Doctrine of the Trinity (1822)' trans. Moses Stuart, *Biblical Repository and Quarterly Observer* 5 (April 1835):p. 33.

359. Christianity has created language. From its very beginning it has been a potentiating linguistic spirit, and it still is. It is providential that it could not annex itself to Hellenistic truth. *Hermeneutics: The Handwritten Manuscripts* p. 50.

360. A helpful view of Schleiermacher similar to mine is Kevin Hector 'Actualism and Incarnation: The High Christology of Friedrich Schleiermacher.' *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 8:3 (July 2006)

361. 'In fact, there is only one eternal and universal [*allgemeinen*] decree [*Rathschluß*] of the justification of men for Christ's sake... and again the decree that sent forth Christ is one with the creation of human generation if first in Christ human nature is accomplished.' (CF 109.3.501/CG 109.3.197.31-33)

## II. The Person of Christ

Beginning with §95 of the *Glaubenslehre*, Schleiermacher pointedly criticises traditional ecclesiastical formulas, both Trinitarian and Christological, in order to bring them more into line with the Christian's awareness of Christ's divinity as it is propounded in the New Testament and experienced in the present day. Just as the existence of God in Christ 'is no hyperbolical expression' so the task of Christology is 'to define the peculiar being of God in that which is other,' a task that can never be finally accomplished since 'we have no formula for the being of God in Himself.'<sup>362</sup> (CF 172.1.747-748) Any constructive account of the being of God in Himself apart from his being in the world, i.e. in Christ and the Church, will be speculative borrowing unfaithful to theological discipline.<sup>363</sup> The proper starting point is not Trinitarian doctrine, but Christology 'especially as the original faith constituting impression made upon the disciples, even as they grasped it in thought and reproduced it, was not connected with any knowledge of a Trinity.' (CF 97.2.399) The 'faith constituting impression' can and does lead to a doctrine of the Trinity for Schleiermacher, which he develops in relation to a reconstructed Sabellianism, but only on the basis of the controlling insights of Christology.<sup>364</sup>

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362. Kevin Hector sums up this impulse: 'As is well known, Schleiermacher resists the traditional doctrine of the Trinity--though not, as one might assume, because it is too 'supernatural', but because he thinks that it fails to do justice to Christ's full divinity. Schleiermacher affirms the intent of traditional trinitarianism, 'namely, to make it clear that it is no hyperbolical expression of Christ and of the common Spirit of the Church to assert that God is in both. ( 172.1, pp. 757-8), but he worries that it fails to do justice to this consciousness.' Hector 'Actualism and Incarnation' p. 320.

363. '...hence we have no formula for the being of God in Himself as distinct from the being of God in the world, and should have to borrow any such formula from speculation, and so prove ourselves disloyal to the character of the discipline at which we are working.' (CF 172.1.748)

364. It remains outside of my scope here to ask the question, which is surely relevant, of how far Schleiermacher's interpretation of Sabellius is right.

Schleiermacher divides his treatment of the person of the Redeemer into two parts: the initial act of union and the continuing union. Together they account for Christ's sinlessness as the completion of creation and effecting of redemption. Any doctrinal formulation of this union will need to describe Christ in such a way 'that in the new corporate life a vital fellowship between us and Him shall be possible' and 'the existence of God in Him shall be expressed in the clearest possible way.' (CF 96.1.391) The real existence of God in him through his God-consciousness must be absolutely determining of his existence, but this must be a *human* existence so that 'this is all in Him in such a way that we can lay hold of it.' (CF 96.3.397) Christ, as the Redeemer, must be truly divine and *in the very same way* be completely and truly human. Schleiermacher, therefore, agrees with the tendency in the creeds and confessions to affirm Christ as truly God and a real brother with humanity. He disagrees, however, with almost every point of the tradition's execution of this tendency.<sup>365</sup> Doctrines of the union, and those related to it, will need to maintain these two commitments: a real existence of God *and* a real human life.<sup>366</sup> The former commitment is stressed in Schleiermacher's account of Christ's dignity, and the latter is his description of Christ's activity in his historical life.

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365. 'Yet, on the other hand, there is almost nothing in the execution of this aim against which protest must not be raised, whether we regard the scientific character of the expression or its suitability for ecclesiastical use.' (CF 96.1.391)

366. 'Judaism maintained the unity of the Supreme Being; but according to this, God in his unity remained in a state of separation from man. He did exhibit himself at times; he made his voice to be heard; and so the giving of the law and prophecy ensued. But his thoughts and his will could thus be made known to men only from without, by means of words and laws...[it could only be ephemeral and magical even if it were internal] But this imperfection was to be done away. The Most High at length transferred his abode to man, and dwelt in him. This was the special object of the Christian dispensation. Real Christian faith was fully persuaded that this had been accomplished... The pagan indwelling of the divinity was demoniacal, and its season of continuance passed away. The Most High, one and undivided, at last ooh up his abode in man; and the Sole Supreme (μοναρχία), by such a union with man, must needs destroy all idolatry.' *On the Discrepancy between the Sabellian and Athanasian Method of Representing the Doctrine of the Trinity* p. 331.

### *A. The Dignity of the Redeemer*

Schleiermacher makes a relative division between the initial act of union, the beginning of the incarnation, and the resulting state of union, the developing life of Christ:

'In the uniting of the divine nature with the human, the divine alone was active or self-communicating [*sich mittheilend*], and the human alone passive or in process of being assumed; but during the state of union every activity was a common activity.' (CF 97.398/CG 97 70.20-25)

The distinction follows the absolute vitality paradigm and mirrors the previous section's account of original and actual sin. The initial union in the birth of Christ, his incarnation in the flesh, overcomes the determination of the human person by original sin.<sup>367</sup> By overcoming sin, the 'insuperable impotence of the God-consciousness,' Christ is 'the beginner and originator of this more perfect human life, or the completion of the creation of man.' (CF 89.1.366-7)

Self-consciousness, as was shown above, for Schleiermacher, is the human response to the whole push and pull of a finite causality of an entirely reciprocal manner, but human attachment to certain objects—attachments developed in human person through her historical location and concrete community—as if they were God prevents this relation from actually appearing. A self-consciousness, however, properly related to God would be aversive to existing forms of human community inasmuch as they transmit original sin and could not, therefore, be a production of those communities. Christ, as the Redeemer, 'cannot be explained by the content of the human environment to which He belonged, but only as the source of spiritual life in virtue of a creative divine act in, as an absolute maximum, the

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367. The continuing union, the achievement of blessedness in the course of Christ's life, is the living out of a life devoid of actual or personal sin.

conception of man as the subject of God-consciousness comes to completion.' (CF 93.3.381)<sup>368</sup> In the initial uniting of the divine and human, the beginning of the incarnation, the human was receptive to an 'an initial divine activity which is supernatural.' (CF 89.4.365) Christ enters into the sinful life from outside of it, and this is 'a miraculous fact [*eine wunderbare Erscheinung*],' to work within the reciprocal relations of creation to bring them to completion, their right relation of dependence on God. (CF 93.3.381/CG 93.46.24)<sup>369</sup>

The unity of the decrees of creation and redemption, including the ordination of sin for redemption, means, for Schleiermacher, that all of the historical finite causality has led to the incarnation, the enfleshment, of the redeemer in the person of Christ: 'we can with equal justice say that Christ even as a human person was ever coming to be simultaneously with the world itself.' (CF 97.2.402) The incarnation is the temporal and spatial manifestation of a singular decree of God, for whom 'there is no distinction between resolve and activity,' as an active aspect of that single decree. (CF 97.2.401) God's activity turned towards humanity is world-forming in the various aspects of creation and redemption and this is especially the case in the Redeemer through whom the world finally comes

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368. Compare with Schleiermacher's earlier description of revelation: '...we might say that the idea of revelation signifies the originality of the fact which lies at the foundation of a religious communion, in the sense that this fact, as conditioning the individual content of the religious emotions which are found in the communion, cannot itself in turn be explained by the historical chain which precedes it...Now the fact that in this original element there is a divine causality requires no further discussion; nor does the fact that it is an activity which aims at and furthers the salvation of man.' (CF 10.PS.49-50)

369. 'The man who does not admit this uniqueness in the appearance of Christ has one and the same task. He must account for all the miracles in light of the laws of nature and by this means explain Christ's life.... The whole thing is a sham. In the way the hypothesis is put forward a complete confusion reigns, and that is a guarantee of the higher appearances of Christ, which represent him as a higher being, as *ens sui generis*, which is why all attempts to understand him in an inferior way fail and the truth of fact itself is lost. *However, that is a task that has not been solved and one for which we can only an approximate solution. This we have to admit, but at the same time we have to treat every detail in a way that is suitable to something that rests on a supernatural foundation but has become something completely natural.* So we must regard this task as a purely theological one.' *The Life of Jesus*, translated by S. Maclean Gilmour, edited by Jack C. Verheyden. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975) p.480.



to be in its sinless receptivity towards God.<sup>370</sup> The division between creation and redemption should be taken as relatively different ways of viewing the single movement of God's action towards the world of which the incarnation forms a part of the coherent whole.<sup>371</sup>

Schleiermacher's description of the initial uniting of the incarnation follows his earlier description of revelation and the founding of a religious communion. Revelation does not come into the world as doctrine, i.e. does not operate on 'man as a cognitive being,'<sup>372</sup> but as something supra-rational *given* to experience capable of bringing forth thought and various conceptions, rather than deduced or synthesised from a proposition.<sup>373</sup> Jesus Christ, comes into the natural, historical, and finite causality determined not by the productive concrete circumstance of original sin but by 'the universal source of Spiritual life [*der allgemeinen Quelle des gesitigen Lebens*] through a creative [*schöpferischen*] divine act [*Act*].' (CF 93.3 p. 381/CG 93.46.29-30) The 'supernatural' newness of the incarnation of God in Christ—revelation in the Christian sense—brings about a way of life through a determination of Christ's person *at the most basic level of feeling*, which is constantly coming to outward expression conditioning those in contact with it. Just

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370. 'This is indeed the case, for it was indeed God's good pleasure from the beginning not to create individual being and life but to create a world, and this is also the way in which the Spirit of God is active, as a world-forming power, and through the Spirit of God there arises not the disorder of individual spiritual life but the spiritual world.' *On Election* p. 76.

371. The division here is parallel to Schleiermacher's treatment of the divine attributes. They are various and plural to us as we encounter them in the world, but are singular for God who is one.

372. 'Now the fact that in this original element there is a divine causality requires no further discussion; nor does the fact that it is an activity which aims at and furthers the salvation of man. But I am unwilling to accept the further definition that it operates upon man as a cognitive being. For that would make the revelation to be originally and essentially doctrine; and I do not believe that we can adopt this position, whether we consider the whole field covered by the idea, or seek to define it in advance with special reference to Christianity.' (CF 10.PS.49-50)

373. 'In one respect all Christian dogmas are supra-rational, in another they are all rational. They are supra-rational in the respect in which everything experiential is supra-rational. For there is an inner experience to which they may all be traced: they rest upon a *given*; and apart from this they could not have arisen, by deduction or synthesis, from universally recognised and communicable propositions.' (CF 13.PS.67)

as the divine causality determines the entire finite causality, the non-self-caused element of Christ's life is his determination by God for the purpose of the completion of creation in the coming to be of the God-consciousness in humanity.<sup>374</sup> Undetermined by original sin, inherited sinfulness will not pass over into actual sin in the course of his life, and, instead, he will begin to take the place of the sinful circumstances, the world of original sin, in the life of the believer.

To attribute a sinless human life to Christ is to ascribe a perfect God-consciousness to him, and '[t]o ascribe to Christ an absolutely powerful [*schlechthin kräftiges*] God-consciousness, and to ascribe to him a being of God in him [*ein Sein Gottes in ihm*], are exactly the same thing.' (CF 94.2.387/CG 94.2.55.1-2) To impute a being of God to someone or something within the finite causality creates a problem right away. God's being is understood as 'pure activity' while every created thing exists within the realm of activity and dependence so God cannot be thought to be present to any *one* thing, 'but only a being of God in the world' as a whole is possible in the form of God's omnipresence [*Allgegenwart*].(CF 94.2.387/CG 94.2.55.4)<sup>375</sup> God's omnipresence, God's being

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374. '...all that it [the anhypostasis of the human nature of Christ] means is that the human nature would not have become this personality of Christ, but that that divine influence upon the human nature is at one and the same time the incarnation of God in human consciousness and the formation of the human nature into personality of Christ.' (CF 97.2.402)

375. The standard translation has been altered. I have translated the entire relevant passage as follows: 'To ascribe to Christ an absolutely powerful [*schlechthin kräftiges*] God-consciousness, and to attribute [*beilegen*] a being of God to him [*ein Sein Gottes in ihm*], are exactly the same thing. The expression 'being of God in any other one' can only express the relationship of the omnipresence of God to this other. Since God's being can only be understood as pure activity, and each isolated being is only an interlocking of activity and suffering, the activity, always being found allocated according to the suffering in all other individual beings: therefore, so far, there is no being of God in a single thing, but only a being of God in the world. And only if the suffering states are not purely suffering but are mediated through a living receptivity and this receptivity confronts the entirety of finite existence, i.e., as one can say of the individual as one living that he, in virtue of the general reciprocity stands for the world, one can assume a being of God in the same... So it is certainly well that the human nature originally, before the Redeemer and apart from all connection with him, in the self-consciousness co-given with God-consciousness, cannot truly be called a being of God in us... but also how it [God-consciousness unconnected to Christ] was not made to assert itself as activity, but herein was always dominated by the sensual Self-consciousness. (CG 94.2.54.1-55.15)

in the world is 'as the enduring causal ground relatively to the changing caused', is God's existence to the world as the ground of the entire finite causality (*CF* 52.2 ET p. 206). The only way, then, God can be in the world is to be in relation to the entirety of finite existence as the determining ground of that existence.<sup>376</sup> The determination must be an expression of God's absolute vitality that does not shift into a determined register. For God to exist in the world *as God*, then, Christ must be determinative in relation to all creation. In other words, God can exist in the world 'only if the world as world were to "appear" somewhere within the world[.]'<sup>377</sup> if the finite causality could come together in some single nexus of forces. As the expression of God's omnipotent omnipresence, the entire finite causality would need to be recapitulated in order for God to appear in the world, the whole world over again, or, which is to say the same thing, the Redeemer must exhibit the same coherent relationship of creation to Creator, the whole finite causality dependent on the divine causality from within the world.

Existing in this way, being God in the world, would necessarily make him ontologically unique as a finite creature determinative of creaturely existence as the Creator is himself the determinative ground.<sup>378</sup> One who determined creation in this way would be an appropriate object of humanity's absolute dependence precisely by being God:

'We have fellowship with God only in a living fellowship with the Redeemer, such that in it His absolutely sinless perfection and blessedness represent a free

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376. 'For this Second Adam [Christ] is altogether like all those who are descended from the first, only that from the outset He has an absolutely potent God-consciousness. With this He enters the existing historical order of human nature, in virtue of a creative divine causality.' (*CF* 89.2.367)

377. Paul J. DeHart 'Ter Mundus Accipit' *Neue Zeitschrift für Systematische Theologie und Religionsphilosophie*. Volume 52, Issue 1(July, 2010) p. 23.

378. 'hence the indwelling being of God in Him must be related to the whole human nature in the same way as that which previously was innermost was related to the whole human organism--an analogy which, even if not clearly expressed, runs through the whole foregoing presentation of the subject.' (*CF* 97.4.411)

spontaneous activity, while the pardoned's need for redemption represents a free assimilative receptivity.' (CF 91.370)

All of this is entailed in saying that Jesus Christ is a being of God in the world without losing the polarity between finite and infinite.

The doctrine of Christ's person in the *Glaubenslehre* once again reproduces the recurring pattern of speaking of God in terms of his 'absolute vitality.' The God-world relationship at work in the doctrine of creation is not undone or altered in the incarnation of the Redeemer, but is, instead, brought to its fulfilment and visibility in Christ as the completion of creation. As a rational human being, Christ will replicate and announce the absolute causality of God in the midst of finite causality. As was the case with talk of the Creator, Christ's outward life will be one of absolute vitality grounded in the living impulse of his inward life, the unshakeable determination of his love for all of creation:

'What we could lay out above as only possible, namely a sinless development of a human individual life, that in the person of the Redeemer must have become actual [*wirklich*] by virtue of this undisturbed identity of relationship.... [that] is not the result of a struggle, inasmuch as it does not need to be worked out either through error or through sin or through a propensity to one of the two. (CG 93.4.49.27-50.16)'

The *interior or absolute* vitality of God is one of movement towards the world; it is absolute *vitality*. The uniting of human and divine in the beginning of the incarnation, therefore, becomes active in the enduring union of Christ's life.

#### *B. The Activity of the Redeemer: Christ's Sinlessness*

With the initial uniting having taken place, the divine and the human in the Redeemer act with 'a common activity.' (CF 97.398/CG 97.70.20-25) If the initial passivity of the human nature in relation to God mirrors the role of original sin in human formation, then the realised sinlessness and expressive actuality of the God-

consciousness in Christ parallels the personal attunement of feeling producing personal sin. The sinlessness of the Redeemer, the actuality of his perfect God-consciousness, then, comes about through the interaction of feeling in the higher and lower human self-consciousness as they are directed by the God-consciousness.<sup>379</sup> This interaction leads to the way in which the world is present in Christ through his determinative receptivity: his 'higher functions' never cease to determine his way of being in the concrete historical world. The pious feeling of absolute dependence actually directs the thinking and doing of Christ's life in a unique way so that he is able to relate to all of creation according to the unchanging being of God within him: divine love.<sup>380</sup> The activity of the Redeemer is the natural extension of his dignity, and is, in fact, only that dignity viewed from a different vantage point. Schleiermacher works out how the activity of Christ, the recapitulation of the unchanging act of God as love, occurs within the finite causality by working out both how the perfect God-consciousness allows Christ to be sinless *and* to communicate this God-consciousness in an unchanging way.

Schleiermacher compares Christ's sinlessness with the fact that certain sinful humans at times avoid sin apart from their own agency. The inward sin of human persons may, at times, be 'prevented from becoming actual. But this happens in such a way that...[we] are even confirmed in this consciousness [of our

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379. 'We are consciousness of sin as the force [*Kraft*] and work of a time in which the direction [*Richtung*] of the God-consciousness had not yet emerged.' (CF 66.1.271)

380. 'Now if that were really the case, and Christ could have come to all these actions, and therefore strictly speaking to the whole work of redemption, only through an accidental feeling [i.e. sympathy], then inevitably our whole idea of the Redeemer would thereby become something different from what which up till now we have represented to ourselves. But our canon also compels us to think of the human nature of Christ in such feelings, not as moved for and through itself, but only as taken up into association with an activity of the divine in Christ. Now this 'divine' is the divine love in Christ which, once and for all in every moment-- whichever expression be chosen--gave direction to His feelings for the spiritual conditions of men. In virtue of these feelings, and in consequence of them, there then arose the impulse to particular helpful acts.' (CF 97.3.407)

sin] through this very perception, for it implies a recognition that in our case the *inner* ground for the prevention of sin is lacking.' (CF 98.1.413) The inner sinfulness remains *sin* after all, and where it is present in the inner impulse of the human being struggle remains. The supernatural aspect of God's being in Christ, however, also bars the way to attributing Christ's sinlessness to a providential arrangement of his circumstances since doing so would totally account for him according to his concrete environment, which is such only because of God's governing action. Christ's sinlessness is, then, a function of his inner determination by the being of God in him such that he is able to engage with sinful circumstances without sinning himself.

In the state of union between God and human in Jesus Christ, the divine and human activities are a common activity.<sup>381</sup> Notwithstanding the unity of these activities, the proper asymmetrical relationship between human and divine is not done away with, but is, instead, made to exist in its proper integrity for the first time. The being of God in Christ remains absolutely active in its direction of the life of Christ, while the human nature assumes its properly passive role before the determination of God.<sup>382</sup> The continuation of this relationship between God and creation prevents the transposition of features between the two that would do away with the integrity of either.<sup>383</sup> God is able to determine the reality of all through a

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381. 'In the uniting of the divine nature with the human, the divine alone was active or self-communicating [*sich mittheilend*], and the human alone passive or in process of being assumed; but during the state of union every activity was a common activity.' (CF 97.398/CG 97.70.20-25)

382. 'So that, to sum up, we may say that there can have been no active state in Christ which, regarded as existing for itself, did not arise from the being of God in Him, and was not perfected by the human nature; and similarly no passive state whose transformation into activity--which first made it a personal state--did not follow the same course.' (CF 97.3.408)

383. '[T]he theory of a mutual communication of the attributes of the two natures to one another also is to be banished from the system of doctrine, and handed over to the history of doctrine. For in so far as we arrive at our ideas of divine attributes only by analogy, the attribution of these to human nature, if that nature is not to be destroyed by the infinity of these attributes, is merely an assertion of absolute human excellence. But on the other hand, in so far as each particular attribute is simply a negation of the essence of man, and it is only when viewed all

finite individual precisely because of the receptive factor of the rational human self-consciousness relating to all of the finite causality at the pre-reflective level of feeling. The human person feels the push and pull of the whole universe through *Gefühl* as it passes over into thinking and doing, but this feeling is limited as it is determined by sin. In Christ, however,

'we posit the God-consciousness in his self-consciousness as continually and exclusively determining every moment, and consequently also this perfect indwelling of the Supreme Being as His peculiar being and His inmost self.' (CF 94.3.388)<sup>384</sup>

The determination of Christ's human self-consciousness by the divine Being, what gives him his absolutely powerful God-consciousness, leads to his sinlessness precisely by overcoming the previously universal tendency in the human higher self-consciousness to be overcome by the sensual self-consciousness. A major indicator of this relationship of determination is Christ's relation to delight and aversion apart from his experience of the antithesis of sin and grace.

Schleiermacher has already linked delight and aversion [*Lust und Unlust*] to the antithesis between sin and grace, and described piety, the religious self-consciousness, as an oscillation between these two points. They bring about this oscillation in the context of the struggle between flesh and spirit, but if this struggle were not to be present then they would take on another character entirely. Delight and aversion, pleasure and pain, exist sinlessly in Christ by not being able to

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together as one that they can represent the Divine Essence, it is impossible to predicate of human nature even the individual features of this collective view.' (CF 97.5.411)

384. 'What did Christ actually understand by the statement that he had been sent by God? Here we find that he often introduced two points concerning himself that we have to regard as essential correlates. (1) He declares that *he had received his teaching from God*. This involves the claim that he alone was able to put men in possession of the truth, to them the consciousness of God, for he claims that his consciousness of God was exclusive. (2) The correlate of this is that he says that *he could do nothing of himself*. He attributes everything to the constancy of his relationship to God, to the constant, uninterrupted vitality of his consciousness of God.' *Life of Jesus* 265.

determine his appropriation of any specific moment, because 'in Christ every moment must be determined by the God-consciousness.' (CF 98.1.415/CG 98.1.91.27-28) The experience of aversion or pain does not serve to lead Christ away from God, as it does with other human beings, but maintains precisely the same relation to the God-consciousness as every experience of delight or pleasure does.

The pain associated with sin, as was shown above, does not follow directly from the sin itself but includes suffering following other sins. Christ's ability to sinlessly suffer is essential to Christian piety:

'within a common sphere of sin it is possible for one to suffer for the rest, so that the evil due to the sin of many may all converge upon one, and that penal suffering may fall pre-eminently upon one who is himself most free from the common guilt and most resolute in his battle with sin.' (CF 77.2.322)

What was a turning away from God, sin, now comes into a relationship with God in Christ who, by being God, overcomes sin by establishing the God-relatedness of all to himself. Even death, the suffering most natural to human beings, does not cause Christ any fear or turn away from the presence of the God-consciousness.<sup>385</sup>

As a human person, he is able to meet with death, evil, and pain without sin since these contexts do not dictate his identity in relation to God, which is secured for all time through the direction of his senses [*die Richtung auf die Wahrnehmungen*].<sup>386</sup>

The higher consciousness, at last, does not succumb to the sensuous self-consciousness, but directs its interaction with the world. As a human like any other,

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385. 'All the more that mortality and the capacity for physical suffering are so closely connected that such a natural immortality in Christ would make the capacity of human nature in His Person for suffering a mere empty phrase, and no great worth could be attached to his physical sufferings without self-contradiction.' (CF 98.1.416)

386. 'Dieses nun ist die göttliche Liebe in Christo, welche der menschlichen Natur einmal für immer oder in jedem Moment, gleichviel wie man es ausdrücke, die Richtung auf die Wahrnehmungen der geistigen Zustände der Menschen gab.' CG 97.3.82.33-36



Christ takes and feels the whole world differently, and this difference *makes* all the difference.

The divine love totally conditions the person of Jesus Christ so that it is constantly expressing itself in particular acts; 'in this interrelation every original activity belongs solely to the divine, and everything passive solely to the human.' (CF 97.3 407-408) The sufferings, then,

'are not purely suffering but are mediated through a living receptivity [*durch lebendige Empfänglichkeit vermittelt*] and this confronts the entirety of finite existence, i.e., as one can say of the individual as one living that he, in virtue of the general reciprocity, stands for the world...' (CG 94.2.55.9-14/ CF 94.2.387)

To put it in more traditional doctrinal terms, Christ lives a sinless life for the sake of the world by suffering the sins of the world—the human aversiveness to God—in order to communicate this sinless existence, his blessedness, to others. Christ establishes the life of Christian piety, and all of the ideal features of the human God-consciousness given earlier in the *Glaubenslehre* begin to reappear in descriptions of his self-consciousness, so he can give, impute, it to others. The inner vitality of God's life in Christ expresses itself by communicating Christ's blessedness as a form of piety, a persistent way of being in the world through a relation to certain concrete circumstances.

### *III. The Work of Christ*

Christ's redemptive activity assumes 'believers into the power of His God-consciousness.' (CF 100.425/ CG 100.104.6-7) Christ's fellowship, parallel to original sin, forms the believer's self-consciousness to enable the increasing presence of God-consciousness to all of life. '[I]n the Christian fellowship... there is still that communication of the absolutely potent God-consciousness in Christ as

a thing which is inward, and yet, since faith can rest upon nothing except an impression received, capable of being experienced.' (CF 88.3.364) The experience of fellowship is the meeting of the Christian's receptive need for redemption due to the misery of sin and Christ's perfection and blessedness as determinative outgoing power.<sup>387</sup> The proper relationship between creature and Creator is effected in Christian fellowship. The influence of the Redeemer becomes the exterior determination, non-self-caused element, of the human self-consciousness turning the believer towards the God-consciousness.<sup>388</sup>

The single decree structure of the creative-redemptive act establishes the divine-human relationship in the incarnation as unique, abiding, and purposive. The permanent reality of this existence of God in Christ is fundamental for Schleiermacher:

'The Most High at length transferred his abode to man, and dwelt in him. This was the special object of the Christian dispensation. Real Christian faith was fully persuaded that this had been accomplished... The pagan indwelling of the divinity was demoniacal, and its season of continuance passed away. The Most High, one and undivided, at last took up his abode in man; and the Sole Supreme (μοναρχία), by such a union with man, must needs destroy all idolatry.'<sup>389</sup>

The unique union, the specificities of Christ's person, are for the purpose of his work of redemption. Any other account of God's existence in a man would be a polytheistic retreat from both genuine monotheism and redemption as the feeling of absolute dependence. A genuinely monotheistic account of God's existence in Christ can maintain the identity of Christ's human nature by supposing some form

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387. 'We have fellowship with God only in a living fellowship with the Redeemer, wherein his plainly sinless perfection and blessedness [*Seligkeit*] represent [*darstellt*] the free-of-itself outgoing activity, but the need for redemption of the pardoned the free-in-itself assimilative receptivity [*aufnehmende Empfänglichkeit*]' (CF 91.370/CG 91.33.4-9)

388. 'The sinfulness that is present in an individual prior to any action of his own, and has its ground outside his own being, is in every case a complete incapacity for good, which can be removed only by the influence of Redemption.' (CF 70.282)

389. 'On the Discrepancy between Sabellian and Athanasian' p. 331.

of pure activity in the human life. Schleiermacher has located this pure activity in Christ's own God-consciousness.<sup>390</sup> Christ's God-consciousness acts as all human God- and self-consciousness act by expressing itself to others who come under its influence, except Christ's influence is total.

'[I]n truth [Christ] alone mediates all existence of God in the world and all revelation of God through the world, in so far as He bears within Himself the whole new creation which contains and develops the potency of the God-consciousness.' (CF 94.2.388)

Christ's self-expression communicates his God-consciousness to a redeemed community by becoming a source of human feeling and Christian piety.

#### A. The Archetype of New Life

In Christ, 'the archetypal [*das urbildliche*] must have become perfectly historical [*vollkommen geschichtlich werden*] and each historical moment thereof bears within it the archetype at the same time.' (CF 93.377/CG 93.41.14-15)<sup>391</sup>

Christ's archetypal existence is contrasted with those who claim for Christ an

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390. '...to ascribe to Christ an absolutely powerful God-consciousness and to attribute to Him an existence of God in Him, are exactly the same thing.' (CF 94.2.387)

391. I have significantly altered the standard translation at this point. The Mackintosh translation gives 'ideal' for *urbildliche* and related words. Archetype seems better suited to Schleiermacher's purpose here especially given the contrast with *vorbild* in the same section. A parallel use of *Urbild* is in Goethe: 'In this sense [Goethe] views his own work, its wide spectrum of different forms, as ultimately rooted in that one and same force of formation, in 'Bildungstrieb.' All forms, even the most unusual ones, are ultimately related to their primordial entities--Goethe's term is 'Urphänomene.' These entities have their own encoded law of being and development, the blue-print of their evolution. This view is at the heart of the poem on the evolution of plants, 'Die Metamorphose der Pflanzen' (1798).

Alle Glieder bilden sich aus nach ew'gen Gesetzen

Und die seltenste Form bewahrt I'm geheimen das Urbild

A similar notion applies to the human being: each one represents indivisible and unique individuality, with its own law, its inborn destiny, entelechy.' Martin and Erika Swales *Reading Goethe: A Critical Introduction to the Literary Work* (Rochester, NY: Camden House) pp. 22-23. See also Carlo Salzani *Constellations of Reading: Walter Benjamin in Figures of Actuality* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2009) p. 32, where Benjamin, in reference to Goethe and German Romanticism, takes up the notion of any timeless *arche* or *Ur*-anything only to reject it, and Salzani's helpful note on p. 239.

exemplary [*vorbildliche*] existence for the Christian community. Examples are produced by the community to embody their communal understanding, and, so, Schleiermacher claims some will see the constant approximation to, rather than arrival at, Christ's God-consciousness in the community as a reason to attribute exemplary dignity to Christ. Christ mirrors the community's own sinful imperfections as the bearer of whatever communal spirit has taken root in the community at that time; 'and this exaggeration continually perpetuates itself in the same manner, since believers in all ages read into Jesus whatever they are able to conceive as ideal in this sphere.' (CF 93.2.378)<sup>392</sup> Schleiermacher strongly objects to this tendency, and especially its enshrinement in theology, contrasting it with theology that understands Christ as properly archetypal, and, therefore, as productive.<sup>393</sup>

Especially in the case of Jesus of Nazareth, the *Urbild* is productive as the inner self coming to various forms of expression in the push and pull of reciprocal history—as what gives form to whatever is attempting to understand it. 'The life of every individual, as it appears to others, suggests at one time his essential, ideal self [*seinem Urbild*], and at another his distorted self [*seinem Zerrbild*].'<sup>394</sup> The essential, ideal self is the proper matter of communication, is what one tries to communicate in speech, gestures, etc., rather than the distorted self, and this ideal

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392. Members of formative groups become attuned to their circumstances in the service of a sinful view with an accompanying errant God-consciousness: 'when in any social group, some definite form of appetite breaks out predominantly, it is presently followed by a transformation of the God-consciousness as a means of cloaking the discordance.' (CF 74.2.308)

393. '...da ja schon die Productivität nur in dem Begriff des Urbildes liegt und nicht in dem des Vorbildes: so ergiebt sich wol, daß nur die Urbildlichkeit der angemessene Ausdruck ist für die ausschließliche persönliche Würde Christ.' (CG 93.2.44.33-35)

394. This is the altered translation Richard Crouter gives of *Soliloquies* (trans. Friess) p. 72 Crouter, Richard. *Friedrich Schleiermacher: Between Enlightenment and Romanticism*. Cambridge Studies in Religion and Critical Thought. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.p. 32.

self 'comes to expression self-reflectively as personal history.'<sup>395</sup> The archetypal produces mediated, reflective thought as the immediate source of that reflection, what human persons are working from when they try to explain their state. Formally, Christ as archetypal mirrors the non self-caused element in the human consciousness Schleiermacher has handled at length in his dissection of human self-consciousness. Just as the self remains the self throughout the various acts of knowing, willing, making sense, and interacting with the world, so the Redeemer remains the same throughout the various historical stages of Christ's life in such a way that he cannot be overcome or left behind by the Christian religion:

'[there are those] of the opinion that Christ is no more even in His inner being than could be manifested of it, while the fellowship of doctrine and life which takes its origin from Christ, with the testimonies to Him which it preserves, has in virtue of special divine guidance so fortunate an organisation that both doctrine and life can easily be remodelled in accordance with any more perfect ideal which later generations might conceive, without the fellowship needing to lose its historical identity.' The logical outcome of this position will remove 'the first presuppositions of the Christian faith' and so Schleiermacher rejects it. (CF 93.2 379-380)

Instead, Christian faith 'knows no other way to a pure conception of the ideal than an ever-deepening understanding of Christ. (CF 93.2 378) The Redeemer, the *Urbild*, is always passing over into thought, language, and action without ever collapsing into or being captured by these individual moments such that each moment of historical thinking and doing bears the archetype within it. With Christ the 'innermost fundamental power' of his person is the existence of God within him as it directs his thoughts, words, actions, i.e. he is determined at the level of feeling. This feeling, however, always becomes an outward expression through 'facial expression, gesture, tones, and (indirectly) words; and so becomes to other people a revelation of the inward.' (CF 6.2.27) The inward existence

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395. Crouter *Friedrich Schleiermacher* p. 32.

coordinating the expressions of Christ is the existence God in Christ as it comes to communication in the form of historical, concrete, and organic human life.<sup>396</sup> The communication happens just as human communication happens generally in language, gesture, music, touch, and wordless looks, with the exception that in living fellowship with the Redeemer

'his plainly sinless perfection and blessedness [*Seligket*] represent [*darstellt*] the free-of-itself outgoing activity, but the need for redemption of the pardoned the free-in-itself assimilative receptivity [*aufnehmende Empfänglichkeit*].' (CF 91.371/ CG 91.35.6-9)

Christ's communication of his innermost self, the real existence of God in him, is entirely spontaneous while Christian reception of it is entirely receptive.

Absolute dependence can only be the result of a receptive activity in the person whose determinant lies outside of their control, and this determinant must be an object worthy of this radical dependence: a historical determinant capable of calling forth the total and complete dependence due to God without ceasing to be historical. The communication of Christ's inner self, then, *is* the feeling of absolute dependence made possible within the vicissitudes of reciprocal human life by the being of God in Christ. Christ determines believers for absolute dependence as a coherent concrete given in human experience affecting the believer at the level of *Gefühl*; Christ works on the believer in the immediate self-consciousness through the normal avenues of human development. Christ's preaching or self-presentation is the activity of God as Word, 'the activity of God expressed in the form of consciousness,' in the flesh, 'a general expression for the organic.' (CF 96.3.397) Christ is God's self-expression within the world--God's self or activity coming into the form of consciousness—precisely by communicating this being of God within

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396. Just as the Athanasian creed has it: *Nam sicut anima rationalis et caro unus est homo, ita et Deus et homo unus est Christus*. Schleiermacher cites this formulation with approval at (CF 96.3.397.n2)

him through the medium of his historical, fleshly, and human existence in an exclusive and final way.<sup>397</sup> By describing Christ as the archetype become historical, Schleiermacher is attempting to explicate the Pauline phrase 'God was in Christ' and the Johannine phrase 'the Word became flesh.' (CF 96.3.397)

Schleiermacher has established the normative significance of the New Testament for the entire Biblical canon so that only those doctrines attested to in the New Testament are 'genuinely Christian doctrine' (CF 27.3.115) capable of providing an alternate base for Evangelical theology the revision of the claims of Protestant confessional documents. Nevertheless he does not think that a historical reconstruction of New Testament belief would be normative for current Christian belief in a straightforward way, but would only prove 'that this [reconstruction] is the original form of the Christian faith.' (CF 88.2.362) Instead the experience of blessedness communicated to the believer from Christ 'so widespread and so long current in the Christian Church, that it must be regarded as the general faith of Christians' (CF 99.PS.421) guides the openly and purposefully revisionary work Schleiermacher will undertake on the confessional documents. His positive doctrines will only need to fall within the range of opinions allowed by Scripture without supposing that his accounts are exclusively related to Scripture. (See the parallel discussion of the use of Scripture by Protestant theologians at (CF 27.3.115.) The revision will remain within the stated intentions of the confessional documents while disagreeing substantially with their positive articulations as

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397. 'In so far as all human activity of the Redeemer depends, as a connected whole, upon this existence of God in Him and represents it, the expression (that in the Redeemer God became man) is justified as true exclusively of Him; and similarly every moment of His existence, so far as it can be isolated, presents just such a new incarnation and incarnatedness of God, because always and everywhere all that is human in Him springs out of that divine.' (CF 96.3.397)

inadequate with regard to 'the scientific character of the expression [and their] suitability for ecclesiastical use.' (CF 96.1.391)

His criticism of the language of the ecclesial tradition is a fairly straightforward and compact discussion occurring mostly in 96.1 of *The Christian Faith* on the grounds that the established language does not allow for God to truly exist in Christ. Schleiermacher especially attacks the formulation of two natures in one person. His criticisms are twofold and stem from a single error. First, nature—φύσις—would need to indicate two comparable elements capable of being brought into some sort of conceptual relationship, i.e. would need to be used univocally in some sense. To coordinate natures within a single concept, person, would be to undo the Creator-creature distinction by finding something in common between them. Second, person and nature both indicate the unity of something across time and are, therefore, functionally synonyms. One of these, person or nature, would need to give way or to come into a single system.

'The attempt to make clear this unity along with the duality naturally but seldom results in anything else than a demonstration of the possibility of a formula made up by combining indications out of which it is impossible to construct a figure.' (CF 96.1.393)

The difficulty comes from an attempt to harmonise person and nature language in Christological and Trinitarian doctrine:

'the original faith-constituting impression made upon the disciples, even as they grasped it in thought and reproduced it, was not connected with any knowledge of the Trinity. But the worst is, that the human nature [of Christ] in this way cannot become a Person in the sense in which this is true of a Person in the Trinity, so that we are confronted with the dilemma, that either the three Persons must, like human persons, be individuals existing independently by themselves, or Christ as man was not such an independent individual—an assertion which gives us a completely docetic picture of Him. It is, therefore, much safer (as it is analogous to the origin and development of faith) to establish the doctrine of Christ independently of that doctrine in the Trinity.' (CF 97.2.399-400)



### *B. Mystical Communication*

The communication of Christ's blessedness, his determination of the believer's life by the being of God *in this way*, takes place in the organic, historical, human society of the church. The ability of Jesus Christ, as a historical human person, to communicate the being of God through his historical mediation of the archetype continues within the community Christ founded for this purpose.<sup>398</sup> Christ's original influence during his earthly life was 'purely spiritual' as something mediated through his bodily presence without being bound by the peculiarities of any material formation. (CF 105.1.467) Schleiermacher means by this that Christ's redemptive communication did not come and go or depend on some single moment of his life. The being of God in Christ was not achieved by some finite or reciprocal act. It was always in Christ as God's act.<sup>399</sup> Within the church, the communion of blessedness dependent on his blessedness, 'even now His spiritual presence is mediated through the written Word and the picture it contains of His being and influence—so that even now His directive control is not simply a mediate and a derived one.' (CF 105.1.467)

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398. 'So that, in attributing a kingly dignity to Christ, we are *eo ipso* declaring ourselves definitely opposed to the contention that Christ did not intend to found an organic community, but that the society of believers came into being, or was formed, later, without his injunction. But since, at the same time, no one enters this community except by submitting himself to Christ's lordship, it follows that Christ Himself initiated this Kingdom, and is thus without any predecessor in His kingly dignity.' (CF 105.1.467)

399. Hence he maintains in 99 of *The Christian Faith*: 'The facts of the Resurrection and the Ascension of Christ, and the prediction of His Return to Judgment, cannot be laid down as properly constituent parts of the doctrine of His Person...' 'For if the redeeming efficacy of Christ depends upon the being of God in Him, and faith in Him is grounded upon the impression that such a being of God indwells Him, then it is impossible to prove any immediate connexion between these facts...[e.g. His Resurrection] does not show a peculiar Being of God in Christ...Belief in these facts, accordingly, is no independent element in the original faith in Christ, of such a kind that we could not// accept Him as Redeemer or recognise the being of God in Him, if we did not know that He had risen from the dead and ascended to heaven, or if He had not promised that He would return for judgment...Rather they [these doctrines] are accepted only because they are found in the Scriptures; and all that can be required of an Protestant Christian is that he shall believe them in so far as they seem to him to be adequately attested... Yet an indirect connexion with that doctrine [Person of Christ] is not to be denied to such belief, in so far, that is, as our judgment about the disciples as original reporters reacts upon our judgment about the Redeemer.' pp. 417-420.

Salvation, for Schleiermacher, occurs because of the particular way the historical person of Jesus Christ communicates a formative power to other historical human persons *as members of a society where his spiritual power persists*.<sup>400</sup>

Schleiermacher places this view of Christ's saving work between magical and empirical models of salvation. The magical approach attributes salvation 'to an influence not mediated by anything natural, yet attributed to a person.' (CF 100.3.430) The historical appearance of the Redeemer or a continued historical mediation of the Redeemer's influence are ultimately immaterial to this approach as the supernatural thing—the Kingdom of God—does not become natural or expressive in human life. (CF 100.2.430) The corporate life produced by the effects of Christ's influence is 'purely accidental' so that Christ can communicate his blessedness to anyone at any time without any discernible change or alteration in the redeemed.<sup>401</sup> Apart from the docetic character of the Christology attendant to this view of salvation, the piety inculcated by a magical view of salvation would not result in the moral improvement of the redeemed and, therefore, contradicts Schleiermacher's account of Christianity as a teleological religion. While magical views of salvation do link salvation with a minimal mediation wherein Christ can be tempted to exert his influence, 'their efficacy is exactly like that attributed to magic spells.' (CF 100.2.430)

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400. 'And just as creation is not concerned simply with individuals (as if each creation of an individual had to be a special act), but it is the world that was created and every individual as such was created only in and with the whole, for the rest not less than for itself, in the same way the activity of the Redeemer too is world-forming, and its object is human nature, in the totality of which the powerful God-consciousness is to be implanted as a new vital principle.' (CF 100.2.427)

401. '...this view is completely separatist in type, for it makes the corporate life a purely accidental thing; and it comes very near to being docetic as well. For if Christ exerted influence in any such way as this--as a person, it is true, but only as a heavenly person without earthly presence, though in a truly personal way--then it would have been possible for Him to work in just the same way at any time, and His real personal appearance in history was only a superfluous adjunct.' (CF 100.2.430)

The empirical approach, on the other hand, 'admits a redemptive activity on the part of Christ, but one which is held to consist only in bringing about an increasing perfection in us.' (CF 100.3 430) Existing only as a teacher and example, an empirical view of Christ has no mechanism for the removal of sin and the *communication* of blessedness that are basic to any Christian piety. If the magical view of salvation failed to understand Christ as a supernatural *cause* of redemption, the empirical fails to understand Christ as a *supernatural* cause of redemption. Christ might be an exceptional teacher or example, but he would still produce only relative improvements in believers without removing the inner power of sin from the believer. As above with an exemplary view of the Redeemer, Christ would only correspond to the highest achievements of sinful societies without taking on the properly receptive character of the redeemed before the Redeemer. The empirical model denies a consciousness of grace by denying this receptive moment in the Christian life, or it attempts to compensate by relating the teaching to an understanding of God's compassionate overlooking of human sin. A general appeal to divine compassion to excuse the imperfect improvements is not, for Schleiermacher, a sufficiently Christian model of salvation. For the Christian consciousness of redemption, however, grace

'is traced to the Redeemer as its cause, and therefore it must always be a different thing in His case from what it is in the case of others—naturally, since it is bound up with something else, namely, the peculiar redemptive activity of Christ.' (CF 100.3.431)

Between these two poles, Schleiermacher describes the proper Christian conception of Christ's communicative work as mystical. The communication is not mystical in the sense of being arbitrary or purposefully vague. But, rather, the communication is mystical because it pertains to those doctrines—assuming doctrines, distinctive Christian concepts, 'are only expressions of inward

experiences'—shared by a few while remaining mysteries to others. (*CF* 100.3.429) Christ, as the founder of the redeemed community, speaks to the experience of sin and frustration in human life through 'effective speech' to form in his hearers 'the idea [*Idee*] which is the innermost principle of his own life, and [to assume] them into the fellowship of that life.' (*CF* 100.3.429/*CG* 100.3.110.2-3)<sup>402</sup>

As a natural, historical community, the church was founded by Christ through his historical self-presentation of the innermost principle of his life—the being of God in him—analogously to the founding of other civic or political communities by an inspirational founder. The concepts and language of Christian faith proceed out from the pre-reflective consciousness of Christ's feeling to the receptive community of believers, who now are subject to the same person forming power of the being of God in Christ through these expressions. Christ communicates the life given to Him by the one he calls Father, and his mission or work is just to communicate this life, through 'an organic complex and could so be assured to the whole of human history.'<sup>403</sup>

The activity of Christ communicates his way of being in the world, his powerful God-consciousness, to the redeemed so that all

'his activities are differently determined through the working of Christ in him, and even all impressions are differently received—which means that the personal self-consciousness too becomes altogether different.' (*CF* 100.2.427)

The communication of this 'mystical' experience is the communication of the God-consciousness to the believers through the formative community of the church and, as the formation of a society, equivalent to God's creative act wherein the unity of

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402. 'The general rubric sums it all up: Christ did what he did to found the kingdom of God, and we can represent his teaching activity only as a specific form in which he endeavoured to carry out his mission.' *Life of Jesus* p. 234.

403. *Life of Jesus* p. 287. See also: '*Teaching concerning Christ's mission*. This is connected in the first place with the point that Christ makes in his theology that the Father has granted him *to have life* in himself, that is, as a *self-communicating power*.' p. 284.

the world comes to be. Taken together, the reception of a new way of being in the world by the redeemed corresponds to the being of God in Christ, which corresponds to the creative act, passing over into the activity of reconciliation and redemption.<sup>404</sup> What makes the difference in Christian piety, the result of Christ's work, is not his example or an ineffective scheme of reconciliation, but is 'Christ in us,' an internal relationship. (CF 101.4.438)<sup>405</sup> The mystery revealed in Christ's mystical communication is the formative power of Christ *within* the Christian believer, a power made known in his preaching and his presentation of his sinless and powerful God-consciousness to the believer frustrated by sin's obscuration of the God-consciousness.

#### IV. Conclusion

Early in the *Glaubenslehre*, Schleiermacher defines Christian piety as a "*monotheistic faith, belonging to the teleological type of religion, and is essentially distinguished from other such faiths by the fact that in it everything is related to*

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404. 'The assumption into the vital fellowship with Christ, therefore, dissolves the connexion between sin and evil, since morally the two are no longer related to each other, even if from the merely natural point of view the one is the consequence of the other. Morally, however, each of them by itself is regarded solely in relation to the task of the new life. Hence, just as the redemptive activity of Christ brings about for all believers a corporate activity corresponding to the being of God in Christ, so the reconciling element, that is, the blessedness of the being of God in Him, brings about for all believers, as for each separately, a corporate feeling of blessedness.' (CF 101.2.433)

405. Schleiermacher's view of salvation follows Colossians 1.27-29 nicely: To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. It is he whom we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone in all wisdom, so that we may present everyone mature in Christ. For this I toil and struggle with all the energy that he powerfully inspires within me.

*the redemption accomplished by Jesus of Nazareth.'* (CF 11.52) By teleological, he means that the redemption accomplished by Jesus of Nazareth leads to a form of piety where the moral task directs the pious person towards some specific goal.

The goal of this moral task is the Kingdom of God where Christ

'exercises His lordship through ordinances which He Himself established, and has Himself declared these to be sufficient, so that nothing is now necessary but the right application of these; and to apply them is the common task of those who are ruled by Christ, just because they are his subjects.' (CF 105.1.468)

The moral development or direction inherent in Christian faith comes about through the modulation of feeling brought on by the reception of Christ's determinative influence coming to expression in the communal formation of the church. As God's being relates to Christ, uniquely determines it at the level of feeling, so Christ relates to the believer through her attempt to metabolise him as he communicates himself in word and sacrament. The specific historical density of his person creates a living fellowship where 'the natural powers of the regenerate are put at [Christ's] disposal' (CF 110 505) to create 'a system of mutual interaction and co-operation.' (CF 115.532)

The reception of Christ's work, however, comes about only through the believer taking on the moral personality of the church community founded by Christ by becoming receptive to the attunement it embodies.

'Taking everything together, we are thus able to say [...]that after Christ's departure the disciples' common apprehension of Christ changed into a spontaneous prolongation of his fellowship forming activity, and how it was only through this activity so related to the fixed apprehension of Christ becoming the imperishable common spirit, that the Christian Church arose.' (CF 122.3.568-9)

The Holy Spirit is the union of the divine Being with the common human spirit of the church animating believers. The presence of the divine being in believers, as with Christ, will be at the person-forming level of affective processing, the visceral feeling of the heart turned at last towards God, precisely by being an execution of

the world-forming act of God, but this formation will differ by referring itself to Christ's *communicated blessedness and perfection*.<sup>406</sup>

As a being of God in the world, the Spirit, just as Christ, cannot be dependent on the interior workings of the created order. Such dependence would place God within the relative passivity and activity of the world undoing his omnipotence, omnipresence, eternity, and omniscience, 'then the feeling expressing this [absolute] dependence likewise could not be true[.]' (CF 40.3.152) Within the world, then, and unlike all other individual existences, God can only exist in Christ when this existence is 'apprehended as pure activity.' (CF 94.2 ET p. 387) As a divinely instituted relationship, the asymmetrical and nonreactive nature of the redeeming relation will be at one with the single, eternal act of God in the single decree. The feeling of election is the feeling of the Spirit's work known in the life of church. Christ's work was to found this community of the Spirit, the kingdom of God.

Being the man that he was, Jesus of Nazareth communicated and communicates the being of God to the members of the fellowship he founded through their living receptivity towards him. The historical particulars of his life constitute the fellowship where 'the natural powers of the regenerate are put at [Christ's] disposal.' (CF 110 505) For Schleiermacher, Christ began to form a fellowship during his earthly life through his influence on his initial circle of followers. This historical fellowship continues the formative activity of Christ such

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406. 'After what has been said, the expression 'Holy Spirit' must be understood to mean the vital unity of the Christian fellowship as a moral personality; and this, since everything strictly legal has already been excluded, we might denote by the phrase *common spirit*... in the Christian church, as individual influences no longer proceed directly [*unmittelbar*] from Christ, something divine must exist, which we equally can call the being of God in it, and it is this which continues in the church the communication [*Mittheilung*] of the perfect and blessedness of Christ.' (CF 116.3 535/ CG 116.3.244.2-5)

that the 'assumption into living fellowship with Christ [comes] to each only from this corporate life, and as the sanctification of each depends on the effective influence upon him of the whole [community].' (CF 106.2.477) Communal regeneration and extension, however, only comes to pass as the renewal of individuals who in turn maintain, extend, and constitute the limits of the redeemed fellowship.<sup>407</sup> Individual regeneration, then, comes about through the believer's appropriation and creative extension of the spirit of the fellowship, which is 'the fixed apprehension of Christ.' (CF 122.3.568-9) The next chapter will be devoted to developing an understanding of the believer's appropriation of the communal spirit of the fellowship *in her unique way*, how the spirit forms her moral personality, and how she goes on to creatively extend the Kingdom in the world.

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407. 'For, the entrance of Christ into humanity being its second creation, humanity thus becomes a new creature, and one may regard this entrance as also the regeneration of the human race, which to be sure only actually comes to pass in the form of regeneration of individuals. And as the community of believers in its true essence consists only of the totality of the sanctified elements of all who are assumed into living fellowship with Christ, so again the sanctification of the individual includes everything by which the fellowship is constituted and maintained and extended.' (CF 106.2.477)



## Chapter 8: Schleiermacher on Church and Spirit

So far in my reading of Schleiermacher, the Christian consciousness has been charted as it has moved from the experience of God under sin through the coming of the Redeemer. Under sin, the feeling of absolute dependence could not come into consciousness in such a way as to determine either doing or thinking in a definitive or regulative way. The active God-consciousness was desired without being appropriated by the potential Christian believer under the influence of original sin. Communities formed by original sin were responsible for the moral personality of the individual who was, therefore, formed by short term sensual concerns. The feeling of absolute dependence, in the pre-reflective relation of *Gefühl*, made clear certain attributes of God despite the partial nature of the God-consciousness providing an abstract and negative view of God's attributes. With the coming of the Redeemer, however, the God-consciousness was made complete and powerful in an individual who was the being of God in the world. Christ's moral personality was *not* constituted by the communal and historical structures of original sin but the being of God in its existence in him. Christ possessed the perfect God-consciousness, blessedness, and the ability to communicate it to others. He was able to do all of these things by repeating in the world the divine causality in its absolute vitality. The analogical point of contact between God and humanity in divine activity and human receptivity was actualised in the Redeemer so that by concentrating on a historical point, Jesus Christ, the right relationship between God and humanity might be actual in his followers.

This chapter will go forward in three main parts. First, the already mentioned feeling of need will be briefly re-described, as Schleiermacher himself does, as the need for church fellowship where potential believers are brought by

God's gracious preservation. Second, I will turn to the entrance of the believer into the formative fellowship of the church through her assumption of the blessedness of Jesus Christ, what Schleiermacher describes as regeneration. This longer section will focus on three aspects of this entrance: the communication of consciousness in Schleiermacher; the constitutive role Christ's consciousness continues to play in the community founded by the Apostles and maintained through Scripture; the entrance of the believer as the mutual recognition of believer and community in baptism. Schleiermacher's understanding of how intention, consciousness, and personality are communicated through text or speech, what Günter Bader has described as the 'palindrome of thought' 'Spirit and Letter—Letter and Spirit' in Schleiermacher, leads him to think of Christ's communication of the being of God as the appropriation of his consciousness and personality through his words.<sup>408</sup> The powerful words of Christ remain, for Schleiermacher, in the church charged with the ministry of the Word, preaching on the basis of Christ's preaching. The whole way of life present in the Apostolic church as the reflection of Christ's teaching becomes, then, the primary site of inspiration and Scripture shares in this Apostolic inspiration. Christ's personality is rendered in the reading of Scripture within the fellowship attuned to his person. Entrance into this community involves reading Scripture with attention to his way of being in the world, which includes certain existential commitments and a fundamental personal attunement. Properly reading Christ's words, contained in the New Testament, in the church comes about through a change at the level of *Gefühl*. The change occurs in the believer's baptism into the church community. Third, life lived in the church under the influence of Christ's

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408 Günter Bader 'Spirit and Letter—Letter and Spirit in Schleiermacher's Speeches 'On Religion' in *The Spirit and the Letter: A Tradition and a Reversal* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013) pp. 131-153.

blessedness primarily forms the believer through compassion towards others on the basis of Christ's presentation of his will. The result of this transformed life will be human life lived in submission to the will of God, the single unified and formative force behind the world and Christ, known in God's love and wisdom, rather than the imposition of any law. The will of God increasingly will operate in the person through her way of taking the world, i.e. at the level of *Gefühl*, rather than through the imposition of an external authority.

### *I. The Need for the Church*

Schleiermacher has already presented sin as 'a positive antagonism of the flesh against the spirit' (CF 66.271) within human experience as that experience oscillates between delight and aversion [*Lust und Unlust*] in its movement towards fellowship with God.<sup>409</sup> This antagonism prevents the feeling of absolute dependence from directing the human consciousness in its acts of doing and thinking, 'evinced only casually in isolated flashes, never kindling to a steady flame.' (CF 106.1.476) A person under sin, then, can desire the superiority of the spirit over the flesh, and, yet, will be unable to produce this changed disposition. Even strict adherence to the law will not allow for 'a new and opposite movement of life [to] develop' in the person desiring to delight in the fellowship of God. (CF 108.2.484) When Schleiermacher turns to describe Christian conversion he

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409. 'Das bisher beschriebene Gottesbewußtsein kommt als wirkliche Erfüllung eines Momentes nur vor unter der allgemeinen Form des Selbstbewußtseins, nämlich dem Gegensatz von Lust und Unlust.' (CG 62.391.6-9) Wenn wir nun im allgemeinen die Art, wie sich das Gottesbewußtseins an und mit dem erregten Selbstbewußtsein gestaltet, nur auf die That des Einzelnen zurückführen können; so besteht das eigentümliche der christlichen Frömmigkeit darin, daß wir uns dessen, was in unsern Zuständen Abwendung von Gott ist, als unserer ursprünglichen That bewußt sind, welche wir Sünde nennen, dessen aber was darin Gemeinschaft mit Gott ist, als auf einer Mittheilung des Erlösers beruhend, welche wir Gnade nennen.' (CG 63.394.28-395.4)

intensifies his description of the human failure to adequately grasp the difficulty posed by sin: 'The law, after its wont, goes into particulars, and the regret evoked by it is only regret for particular motions and affections and not for the general condition and its deepest cause.' (CF 108.2.484) The root problem, the deepest cause of sin, only becomes visible in light of Christ:

However large the previous experience of this regret may have been the true conversion-regret must always eventually arise out of the vision of the perfection of Christ... Christ awakens a wholly perfect regret just in so far as His self-imparting perfection meets us in all truth, which is what happens at the dawn of faith. And Christ can, in fact, lay hold of us in His receiving activity only if and when His soul-stirring exhibition of Himself to us leads us to abjure utterly our previous condition. (CF 108.2 484)

Sin is only known *as sin* in light of the regret brought on by the figure of Jesus Christ. The forces of the divine causality encountered within the life of sin, i.e. life previous to conversion, are now understood as the workings of God's preparatory grace working to make the believer ready for Christian regret and repentance.<sup>410</sup>

In light of Christ's self-presentation, the potential believer approaches Christian faith as she regrets her previous sins in 'continual abjuration of the fellowship of the sinful, and there is also the desire to receive the impulses that come from Christ.' (CF 108.2.485) The formative fellowship of original sin must be renounced in favour of the formative fellowship of blessedness, the church, as the place where the need for redemption can be met. This transition, however, is *not* a general anthropological or religious fact, but, instead, arises only from the

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410. 'All such stimulations [of regret by Christ] arriving as they do from the influence of the common Christian life, even though they are only an unconnected and casually-appearing mixture of elements, are to be regarded as divinely caused, and indeed involved in the divine ordinance which places all men in relation to the Redeemer; and in this sense such a condition is ascribed to the *prevenient grace of God*.' (CF 108.2.485)

historical appearance of the Redeemer, Jesus of Nazareth.<sup>411</sup> Christ remains active in communicating his blessedness in the present time through those who continue to preach him in the fellowship of the church.<sup>412</sup> The dual call to repentance and forgiveness must be mediated by the Word in the appearance of Jesus Christ, and yet the simple historical mediation does not entirely account for the arrival of a living faith. As was shown above, Schleiermacher tries to position his own view of salvation between magical, i.e. immediate and inward, and empirical, i.e. simply historical, models by maintaining the power of the Word to communicate supernatural blessedness in the historical life of Christ.

The supernatural becoming natural paradigm at work in the uniting and the unity of the divine and human in Christ holds for the communication of blessedness to the believer: the initial passivity of the believer right away begins to produce the spontaneous activity of sanctification.<sup>413</sup> The process of Christian conversion parallels the incarnation of Christ by requiring a necessary but ultimately insufficient historical formation to serve as the new birth of a being of God in the world.<sup>414</sup> The necessary but not sufficient historical location of Christian

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411. 'Regret that lies outside Christianity and has no reference to the consciousness of God is beyond the scope of our discussion. But within the sphere of Christian piety, if we carry our examination further back into the common life of sinfulness, we find many sorts of regret. Such regrets, too, can be traced back more or less directly to the vision of Christ, and are not always limited to some particular, but may show genuine pain at the general human state of sinfulness as illustrated in one's own person; but they do not develop into a continuous inward movement amounting to the dawn of living faith.' (CF 108.2.485)

412. 'The constant factor is above all the divine power of the Word--taking the expression in its widest sense--by which conversion is still effected and faith still arises. The difference is simply that the self-revelation of Christ is now mediated by those who preach Him; but they being appropriated by him as instruments, the activity really proceeds from Him and is essentially his own.' (CF 108.4.490-491) 'Our proposition, therefore, depends upon the assumption that this influence of the fellowship in producing a like faith is none other than the influence of the personal perfection of Jesus Himself.' (CF 88.2.363)

413. 'It seems obvious, then, that here no causal agency can be attributed to the person who is being taken up into fellowship, for the higher form cannot be in any way derived from lower stages of life as present either in a group of people yet to be converted.' (CF 108.6.493)

414. '...the incarnation of Christ is analogous to the regeneration of the whole race considered as a unity.' (CF 118.1.540)

conversion is the actually existing Christian church apart from which blessedness is not possible.<sup>415</sup> Entrance into blessedness requires membership in the church that continues the self-presentation of the Word of God in Jesus Christ reversing the dynamic of original sin. Where common original sin was responsible for individual actual sins, in the church sin remains in individuals while '[r]edemption is possibly only in the form of a common life.' (CF 111.3.515)

Like the incarnation, though, conversion cannot be made into a punctiliar intervention by God in the world but comes about as part of God's single eternal decree: redemption is the completion of creation. Conversion

'cannot be distinguished either in and for itself, or by any particular mark, from the effects of preparatory grace... [t]he idea that every Christian must be able to point to the very time and place of his conversion is accordingly an arbitrary and presumptuous restriction of divine grace, and can only cause confusion.' (CF 108.2-3.486-487)

Entrance into the Christian community, especially when infant baptism is practiced, *cannot* entirely be equated with the apprehension of blessedness by the believer.<sup>416</sup> The only possible sign of conversion is the manifestation of sanctification through the believer's extension of the Kingdom of God in her personal transformation through, in, and for the church. The change effected in conversion, as the communication of Christ's God-consciousness and the being of God, occurs at the level of piety and *Gefühl*, the Christian's attunement in the world, through the operation of the finite causality upon her in her concrete situation. The specific change in *Gefühl* occurring in the Christian church follows from the

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415. 'No one, therefore, can be surprised to find at this point the proposition that salvation or blessedness is in the Church alone, and that, since blessedness cannot enter from without, but can be found within the Church only by being brought into existence there, the Church alone saves.' (CF 113.3.527)

416. '...as has been shown, it [viz. the equivalence of baptism and regeneration] is only true as describing a certain ideal perfection of the Church, which is not at any single point really *given*, and cannot really be manifested in any single action.' (CF 136.4.625)

operation of the Word of God in the church on the believer through her natural means of knowing and doing, her way of being a subject in the midst of the forces of the world.

## *II. Regeneration (Wiedergeburt) 1: Approaching the Church*

As was mentioned above, the believer's movement into faith makes use of the absolutely vitality paradigm Schleiermacher has deployed throughout the *Glaubenslehre*, and especially its historical form in the incarnation of the Redeemer as the supernatural becoming natural. In the believer, this paradigm presents itself in the interrelated moments of regeneration and sanctification. Regeneration mirrors the initial act of union in the incarnation as the believer undergoes conversion and justification.<sup>417</sup> In order for regeneration to function as the analogue of God's act of uniting with humanity, the regenerate believer must deal with Christ such that 'no causal agency can be attributed to the person who is being taken up into fellowship for the higher form cannot be in any way derived from the lower stages of life...' (CF 108.6.493)

### *A. Conversion*

The receptivity of the believer consists in her repentance, which is her turning away from the previously existing fellowship of sinful life formative of her

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417. 'If now in this connexion we recall what was said before, namely, that the relation of Christ to the rest of his humanity is exactly the same as the relation within His personality of its divine to its human element, we may add that these two conceptions, regeneration and sanctification, set forth just the same distinction as between the act of uniting and the state of union; except that in that instance first of all one Person originated intact, and so the state of union too was an unbroken continuity, and an uninterrupted diffusion through the human nature; which would, accordingly happen in this instance too were it not that, through the identity of the subject with the earlier personality, elements from the life of sinfulness are still present as a hindrance.' (CF 106.1.477)

person.<sup>418</sup> The consciousness formed by the sinful fellowship, with its consciousness of deserved punishment and distance from God, has prevented the believer from possessing an active God-consciousness; has obstructed the feeling of absolute dependence, the believer's right relationship with God. The believer, however, when she apprehends Christ's blessedness and God-consciousness, begins to approximate a way of taking the world so free that the finite causality of forces does not lead to the domination of her life by her sensual self-consciousness, wherein even suffering and pain do not diminish the God-consciousness, as directive of her feeling. 'That co-operation of the mental organism in the reception of the Word implies a consent of the will; and this is just a surrender to the operation of Christ or giving rein to a lively susceptibility thereto.' (CF 108.6.494.) The change in the will, 'the self-consciousness [...] viewed as passing into action', comes about through a new form of life available in fellowship with Christ. (CF 107.1.478)

### *B. Justification*

The other aspect of regeneration is justification. Justification is the result of God's justifying act in the 'forgiving of [the believer's] sins, and the recognising of him as a child of God.' (CF 109.496) For the believer, the connection between sin and suffering, related to God's holiness and justice, ceases to be active for whom 'the consciousness of guilt is thus abolished.' (CF 109.2.498) The remaining effects

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418. 'Christ awakens a wholly perfect regret just in so far as His self-imparting perfection meets us in all its truth, which is what happens at the dawn of faith. And Christ can, in fact, lay hold of us in His receiving activity only if and when His soul-stirring exhibition of Himself to us leads us to abjure utterly our previous condition.' (CF 108.2.484)

'There remains over from regret the continual abjuration of the fellowship of the sinful life, and there is also the desire to receive the impulses that come from Christ. This desire, acting in two directions, is the change of heart effected by Christ which binds regret and faith together and represents the true unity of conversion.' (CF 108.2.485)



of sin are simply the 'after-effect' of the old fellowship of sin persisting in an increasingly lessening way in the regenerate life. (CF 109.2.498) The connection between the two no longer obtains for the believer in just the same way as they never were connected for Christ, and the believer can endure suffering with the same joy as Christ did.<sup>419</sup>

The change of self-consciousness in justification changes the believer's relationship to God but does not however signal a change in God *or* a particular justifying act of God directed to an individual. God acts in the single, eternal, and universal decree of creation and redemption to justify the world as world, and the gracious act of justification does not belong to Christ alone.<sup>420</sup> An individual act or punctiliar decree of forgiveness disconnected from God's singular act of Creation-Redemption would subject God to 'the antithesis of abstract and concrete, or universal and particular' invalidating God as the object of absolute dependence. The alteration of the believer's relationship to God is the result 'of one divine act.' (CF 109.3.501) The single divine act of creation and redemption realises itself in time as the goal of God's decree of justification and adoption.<sup>421</sup> In Christ, the believer does not become the object of divine love for the first time, but in him 'the consciousness of the relation [arises] in the individual' as a historic possibility. (CF 109.3.502; CF 109.4.503) The change in self-consciousness made historically

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419. '...while for the rest, there lies in living fellowship with Christ, immediately and not just as a vague something in the future, a readiness for and right to fellowship with the sufferings of Christ, which make it impossible for him to keep regarded social and still less natural evils as punishment, or to go on fearing future punishment--impossible, for he is at the same time received into the fellowship of the kingly office of Christ.' (CF 109.2.499)

420. CF 109.3.501 contains Schleiermacher's pivotal discussion of the single decree of God worked out in creation and incarnation.

421. it is already implied in the divine decree of redemption or of new creation of human nature that God is gracious to the human race in His Son; hence and individual act making the individual an object of the divine love is not necessary. All that is needful is that the consciousness of this relation should arise in the individual; and this happens in the way already described. Thus we have to posit only one universal justifying divine act bearing on redemption, and this realises itself gradually in time.' (CF 109.3.502)

available in Christ and his preaching, because it is a means for the individual believer to relate to the forces of the flux of the world, changes the relationship of the believer to God by communicating the victory of the higher self-consciousness of God over the sensual, sinful, historically prevalent self-consciousness, by allowing absolute dependence to overcome the idolatrous elevation of relative dependence.

To understand how, according to Schleiermacher, the immediate self-consciousness of the believer is changed through appropriation of Christ's absolutely potent God-consciousness and to take the world in a new way, I will now take up Schleiermacher's account of how the particular social life of the church forms the believer through its production of an understanding of the believer's relationship to God through Jesus Christ in the believer.

As was shown above, this transition from sin to blessedness in the church does not override or undo the perfection [*Vollkommenheit*] of the material world as the place where 'the receptivity of man to the awakening and shaping of self-activity' can take place as that 'would involve the denial of man's capacity to appropriate redemption' inherent in 'humanity's disposition to the 'God-consciousness.' (CF 59.1.238; CF 70.2.283) The appropriation of redemption by the believer will be a movement in the historical material world modulating her shaping self-activity as the recipient of divine grace.

'For the Word through which the influence of Christ is mediated can mediate only by making an impression on men, and for this the activity of his sense-faculties as well as of the inner functions of his consciousness is required... the capacity of apprehension must therefore be allowed to exist in his natural condition...[t]hat cooperation of the mental organism in the reception of the Word implies a consent of the will; and this is just a surrender to the operation of Christ or giving rein to a lively susceptibility thereto.' (CF 108.6.493-494)

The felt need to receive the Word at work in the church, and to receive it through normal human communication, will, when apprehended and grasped, manifest itself in active transformation appropriate to a teleological religion. I will now, therefore, turn to Schleiermacher's understanding of linguistic communication.

### *III. An Understanding of Understanding*

For Schleiermacher, understanding or knowing comes about through a relation between subject and object wherein an abstract concept is applied to a material or sensual element the positive congruence of which ought to possess a general validity communicable to others.<sup>422</sup> Subjects grapple with the objects of their sensual experience by means of language and concepts in order for this understanding to pass to other subjects and their thought in speech. As a result,

'every utterance [*Rede*] has a dual relationship, to the totality of language [*Sprache*] and to the whole of thought of its originator, then all understanding [*Verstehen*] also consists of the two moments, of understanding the utterance as derived from language, and as a fact [*Tatsache*] in the thinker.'<sup>423</sup>

These two moments position human understanding in the middle of the relationships present in a given language and the particular experiences of human persons of the flux of forces in the universe as they make use of that language. The process remains dialectical throughout as language limits and guides self-consciousness, while experience brings to light aspects of the unity of the world

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422. Every instance of thinking arises from two elements, a formal element and a material element.' *Dialectic* 19. 'An instance of thinking that is formal can never be one of knowing but is only a preliminary apparatus for becoming an instance of knowing. It can become an instance of knowing only in that what is vacuous is (1) filled in and (2) organic function is also constantly present within it, even if in a minimal way.' p. 20. When a piece of thinking is posited as knowing we posit the general validity of this knowing for everything the action of which is comprised of that thinking. Whatever lacks this general validity we do not consider knowing. We have much within us regarding which we are conscious of never being able to think otherwise but without having the pretension that other too ought to think this way.' p. 14.  
423. *Hermeneutics* p. 8 /*Hermeneutik* p. 77.

unaccounted for in a given language. In his lectures on *Dialectic*, Schleiermacher's example of the unity of this dialectic through which concepts gain clarity through personal criticism and communication is Socratic dialogue:

'In the Socratic school dialogue took the place of the arbitrary diatribes of the sophists; hence for them the principles for dialogue and for construction of knowledge overall were the same. Thereby the general validity of the principles applying to each was set forth at the same time.'<sup>424</sup>

Knowledge comes about through and as the dialogue of subjects attempting to express their own way of taking the world. Keeping in mind the intrinsic relationship between these two moments, I will now take them in turn.<sup>425</sup>

#### *A. Taking the World*

Personal knowledge comes about for the individual through a combination of her felt sense of the world's unity, the language available to her, and the sensuous stimuli she encounters in the course of her life.

The whole finite causality comes to human persons who relate to this causality in *Gefühl*. Personal feeling entails an intuition or sense of the whole causality where 'the universe manifests itself as totality, as unity in multiplicity, as system and thus for the first time deserves its name.'<sup>426</sup> The unity or totality of the universe contained in feeling will be presupposed by all subsequent knowing, and, in fact, subsequent knowledge will simply be the attempt to bring this intuition of the 'unity in multiplicity' into self-consciousness. As I have already shown, for Schleiermacher feeling comes before knowing and gives birth to it as the self's

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424. *Dialectic* p. 6.

425. The primary source of my arguments here will be two texts unpublished in Schleiermacher's own time dealing with various aspects of understanding. His lectures on *Hermeneutics* have been combined with his own handwritten notes in a text focussed on texts in general and the New Testament in particular. His lectures on *Dialectic, or the Art of Doing Philosophy* come from primarily from notes taken at his lectures focussing on knowing and understanding in a more general context.

426. *Speeches* 1st ed. p. 52.

attempt to reflect on its own immediate self-consciousness, but the unity *always already* exists independent of the self's reflective recognition of the unity.<sup>427</sup> All mediate or reflective knowledge begins with this felt unity of the world, with the reality of the universe, or it will be speculative in a bad sense. Knowledge beginning with this feeling of existence moves into knowing through language and sense perception.

Expression of an individual's sense of the unity of the universe can only occur in language:

'The individual is determined in his thought by the (common) language and can think only the thoughts which already have their designation in his language...This is based on the fact that thinking is an inner speaking. But from this one can also positively conclude that language determines the progress of the individual in thought.'<sup>428</sup>

Language provides the concepts available for the individual to make sense of and express to others and herself the relationship between the specific—a particular object or range of objects—and the unity of the universe. Concepts 'become an instance of knowing only in that what is vacuous is (1) filled in and (2) organic function is also constantly present within it, even if in a minimal way.'<sup>429</sup> Language attempts to show the relationships present in the flux of the finite causality as they cohere in certain objects capable of fixed perceptions.<sup>430</sup> The origin of language for Schleiermacher comes from the attempt of the reflective consciousness to bring *concrete* beings, rather than abstract ideas, into thought.<sup>431</sup> Concrete beings,

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427. 'We rather presuppose [supreme knowing] as existing already and want simply to attain consciousness of it; it exists in all our knowing but previously in an unconscious way and only under the form of activity; it is indeed something actually at work, but it is not also taken up into consciousness.' *Dialectic* 9.

428. *Hermeneutics* p. 9.

429. *Dialectic* p. 20.

430. 'For language is not just a complex of single representations, but also a system of the relatedness of representations.' *Hermeneutics* p. 9.

431. 'Living, naturally growing language begins with perceptions and fixes them. Therein lies the material for the difference of manners of use, because there are always many relationships in perception... If one understands by sensuous that which arises via external perception, and by

however, possess their character as a result of their place within the relationship of forces at work in the world.

Personal use of language comes about when individuals attempt to express the relationships constituting various objects they perceive in concrete living as those objects come to their consciousness. Personal consciousness of the organic function of the human consciousness, the use of the senses to encounter material force, directs the use of the language in communication and innovates by establishing new connections within the language.<sup>432</sup> New connections within language follow the introduction of new elements previous speakers did not recognise leading to new uses of existing language rather than the creation of new languages. These new connections name relationships already existing in immediate self-consciousness, but hitherto unacknowledged in mediate self-consciousness, through innovative use of already existing language. The sense of the self in the world, what Schleiermacher elsewhere describes as the *Urbild* of the self, attempts to express itself with the concepts at hand in its life, and its transformation of those concepts in its use of them opens up aspects of its own experience to others.

### *B. Talking about the World*

To understand another's speech one attempts to reconstruct the relationship between the meaning of the language and the consciousness of the speaker. In his

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abstract via inner perception, then this is one-sided, for all original perception is inner perception. But it is true that nothing abstract [abstrakt] is originally in language, but it is rather the concrete which is originally in language.' *Hermeneutics* p. 37.

432. 'By recognising the author in this way I recognise him as he collaborates in the language: for in part he produces something new in it, because every connection of a subject and a predicate which has not yet been made is something new, in part he preserves what he repeats and reproduces. In the same way, by knowing the language area, I know the language to the extent that the author is its product and is in its power. Both are therefore the same, only looked at from a different side.' *Hermeneutics* p. 91.

lectures and notebooks on hermeneutics, which focus primarily on understanding the New Testament texts, Schleiermacher divides understanding into the grammatical and psychological aspects of interpretation. The grammatical attempts to reconstruct the use of language contemporary to the speaker; the psychological the intended unity or theme of the use of the language. Grammatical explication charts out the 'language area' and the basic genre of the text.<sup>433</sup> This part of the process takes place at a minimal level when the speaker is contemporary with the hearer, but can require a good deal of work when the speaker or writer worked at a historically distant time. Historical interpretation does not suffice, however, where intuitive concept formation has occurred:

'The insistence on historical interpretation...becomes mistaken if it denies the new concept-forming power of Christianity [*die neue begriffsbildende Kraft des Christentums*] and wants to explain everything from what is already there... The whole issue then depends on the relationship of grammatical and psychological interpretation, for the new concepts arose from the particular enlivening of the mind [*Gemüts-erregung*].'<sup>434</sup>

The enlivened mind forms new concepts by bringing previously unconnected elements of experience into a relationship in the reflective self-consciousness *on the basis of their already existing connection in the interconnected system of the universe felt in the pre-reflective self-consciousness*. Connecting these elements as subject and predicate in language, the speaking or writing reflective self-consciousness presents new concepts through the use of established language in light of its personal experience of the push and pull of the system of the universe. Interpretation is the attempt to understand the state of self-consciousness responsible for bringing this previously unacknowledged connection into language and thought.

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<sup>433</sup>. *Hermeneutics* p. 90.

<sup>434</sup> *Hermeneutics*, p. 15/ *Hermeneutik* p. 85

The historical language area of a time, the grammar, combines with the 'psychological' [*psychologische*] aspect of interpretation concerned with individual's intuitive sense, the intuitions and intentions of personal consciousness, to bring about an understanding of a text or speech. No rules, however, exist for precisely how grammatical and psychological interpretation ought to take place<sup>435</sup>, only an acknowledgment that 'understanding [*das Verstehen*] is only a being-in-one-another of these two moments.'<sup>436</sup> One attempts to understand the psychological aspect either through a comparison with other uses of language or the divinatory [*divinatorische*] method wherein one 'so to speak, transforms oneself into the other person and tries to understand the individual element immediately [*das Individuelle unmittelbar aufzufassen sucht*].'<sup>437</sup> The oscillation between these elements, the grammatical and the psychological, can bring about, in the reading of a text, at most a harmonisation or approximation [*Annäherung*] between speaker and hearer or author and reader: 'Individual intuition [*Anschauung*] is not only never exhausted but also always capable of correction.'<sup>438</sup> The particular individual intuition of the world in each person, dependent on her specific place in the system of the universe, cannot completely pass over to someone else, who is in turn in her specific place in the system, but a degree of harmonisation can take place such that understanding does occur.

Nevertheless, Schleiermacher does not set out a general theory of interpretation or understanding because a general theory cannot exist apart from

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435. 'For the grammatical side to be completed on its own there would have to be a complete knowledge of the language, in the other case [the psychological] a complete knowledge of the person. As there can never be either of these, one must move from one to the other, and no rules can be given for how this is to be done.' *Hermeneutics* p. 11.

436. *Hermeneutics* p. 9 / *Hermeneutik* p. 79.

437. *Hermeneutics* p. 92/*Hermeneutik* p. 169. I have altered Crouter's translation so that *unmittelbar* reads immediately rather than directly.

438. *Hermeneutics* p. 92/ *Hermeneutik* p. 168.



total reflective knowledge of the system of the universe, and contemporary knowing is only at the beginning of that venture.<sup>439</sup> In the absence of a total knowledge of the world, the sense of unity of the world responsible for understanding *now* comes from the pre-reflective relationship of dependence on God, who remains incomprehensible, or some understanding of the absolute.<sup>440</sup> The principle of unity presupposed in our understanding of the universe, our reflective account of felt totality of relationships, indicates the sort of unity we feel in the connected set of judgments, concepts, and practices of our language.<sup>441</sup> For instance, Christians at least want to say something about God who has communicated his being to them by making the world a certain sort of place.<sup>442</sup> Appropriating a way of taking the world, blessedness, will involve understanding God through a reconstruction of Christ's sense of the world handed down through

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439. 'Hermeneutics as the art of understanding [*Kunst des Verstehens*] does not yet exist in a general manner, there instead only several forms of specific hermeneutics.' *Hermeneutics* p. 5 / *Hermeneutik* p. 75. 'What has been set forth [in these lectures] is knowing in its completion, except that it is present only as something that is becoming.' *Dialectic* p. 31.

440. 'The deity is just as surely incomprehensible as the knowledge of it is the basis of all knowledge. Exactly the same is true also on the side of feeling.' *Dialectic* p. 31.

441. 'The goal of dialectics is 'knowledge', i.e. bringing the theory to a state of 'unchangeability and universality' (*Hermeneutik* p. 414). There must be consensus between the partners in a discourse as to the orientation to this goal; for without the 'presupposition' of an ideal knowledge (however unattainable) there would be, given the insoluble differences between the opinions confronting one another and the inadequacy of a 'truth' controlling the conversation from above, no guarantee of the intersubjectivity of agreements reaching in any discourse. A further presupposition of dialectics implied in the postulate of the ideal unity of knowledge is the sameness of the object to which divergent practices are ascribed. This alone makes possible the clash between 'contradictions' which are to be resolved by dialectics (*Hermeneutik* pp. 426ff.)' Manfred Frank *The Subject and the Text* ed. Andrew Bowie, trans. Helen Atkins (Cambridge: CUP, 1997) pp. 8-9.

442. 'In der bewußtseinstheoretischen Gestalt der Theorie der Frömmigkeit finden dabei die folgenden wesentlichen Konstitutionselemente der Frömmigkeit als Konstitutionselemente des Selbstbewußtseins Aufnahme: Der Anlaß des frommen Selbstbewußtseins im Bezogenes des Menschen auf die Welt, also im Weltbewußtsein; der Inhalt des frommen Selbstbewußtseins als Bewußtsein der Bezogenheit von Subjektivität auf etwas außerhalb ihrer selbst und außerhalb der Welt Liegendes; die relational bestimmte Struktur des frommen Selbstbewußtseins als die in der Weise ihrer Gegenstandsbezogenheit vorgegebene notwendige Gestalt; und die Notwendigkeit der Artikulation des Inhaltes des frommen Selbstbewußtseins im Ausdruck 'Gott.'" Christian Albrecht, *Schleiermachers Theorie der Frömmigkeit: Ihr wissenschaftlicher Ort und ihr systematischer Gehalt in den Reden, in der Glaubenslehre und in der Dialektik* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1994) p. 259.

his formation of language in his preaching, an approximation to what he presents in his life, that remains powerfully in the church.

#### *IV. Regeneration (Wiedergeburt) 2: The Ministry of the Church*

##### *A. The Ministry of the Word*

The process outlined above in terms of how understanding passes between different persons must be applied, for Schleiermacher, to the development of the New Testament within the church as the work of the Spirit. Possessing a felt need for redemption, and faced with the figure of Jesus Christ, the potential believer stands in the same position as those Apostles who first encountered Christ.<sup>443</sup> The Apostolic faith did not, though, arise from their understanding of Scripture, but came from Christ's own work of self-presentation: 'their faith sprang from Christ's preaching of Himself, so in the case of others faith sprang from the preaching of Christ by the Apostles and many more.' (CF 128.2.593) The need for redemption, awakened in the Apostles by the preaching of John the Baptist, did not combine with faith in, or an understanding of, the Scriptures or the prophets. Instead, it was met by the 'direct impression which awakened faith' in their souls leading them to 'express their faith communicatively by recurring to Jesus' words and deeds.' (CF 128.2.592)

Since, as far as the grounds of faith are concerned, contemporary believers remain in the same situation as the Apostles, Christian faith cannot arise from or depend on any special doctrine about Scripture or from any already established

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443. 'With respect to the grounds of faith, then, we can admit no distinction between different classes. And no more can we admit a distinction between periods of time; the grounds of faith must be the same for us as for the first Christians.' (CF 128.2.592)

conceptual consensus. This must especially be the case if the blessedness communicated by Christ, i.e. redemption, affects the believer's subjectivity at that level where she is not responsible for her determination, *Gefühl*. The 'uncontrollable determinedness' of the self in feeling in relation to the flux of the world, *Gefühl*, subsequently determines her self-reflection and -mediation in knowing and doing.<sup>444</sup> The communication of blessedness occurs through a modulation of *Gefühl* on the basis of a commitment to an orientation, a goal, and a common object capable of reconciling differences in understanding and practices.

Understanding Christ's preaching in the New Testament, therefore, does not follow from simply gaining a critical or scientific understanding of the texts only a few are capable of, as if 'faith, given a certain degree of culture, could be implanted by argument,' but comes about as the recognition of Christ's spiritual power to communicate blessedness through the 'applied presentation of Christ and invitation in His name' present in the ministry of the church. (CF 127.3.590) This caveat is necessary because if a proper understanding of the blessedness communicated in Christ depended on an ability to read the Scriptures with a critical or scientific eye, then the majority of Christian believers, who do not possess the requisite training to read in that way, would be unable to come to faith, which is 'incongruous with that equality of all Christians which the Evangelical Church proclaims,' and faith would be detached from repentance. (CF 128.1.591) The New Testament writings, as writings, do not require a peculiar hermeneutic different from the normal rules for understanding a text.<sup>445</sup> The Apostolic writings of the New Testament, then, are not marked out for *how* they communicate but for *what* they communicate.

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444. Frank *The Subject and the Text* p. 7.

445. '[W]e must reject the suggestion that in virtue of their divine inspiration the sacred books demand a hermeneutical and critical treatment different from one guided by the rules which obtain elsewhere.' (CF 130.2.600)

Scripture retains its place in the church because the New Testament writings are Christ's preaching—transmitted to and through the fellowship—capable of arousing faith in believers.<sup>446</sup>

The Holy Scriptures are 'the permanent reflection of [Christ's] prophetic activity, inasmuch as in their composition and preservation, regarded as the work of the Church, they form the most direct exhibition of Christ' (*CF* 127.3.590) and were 'inspired by the Holy Spirit, and the collection of them took place under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.' (*CF* 130.597) The authors of the New Testament, however, were not given particular content to write by the Holy Spirit. They received, from Christ, a 'single individual bestowal of knowledge out of which the particulars evolved organically.' (*CF* 130.1.598) Christ's preaching communicated something of his way of being in the world to the Apostles, or at least the Apostolic age of the church fellowship, who in turn began to approximate Christ's way of being in the world in relation to God, his God-consciousness. Christ's earthly work of self-presentation modulated the feeling of the Apostles so as to bring them into living fellowship with himself.<sup>447</sup> The spontaneous activity of the Apostles after this modulation had begun to occur expressed itself as a common spirit that became fixed after Christ's departure and circulated through a recounting of his words and deeds.

Following Christ's departure, the Apostles became active in forming the fellowship of believers through the establishment of Kingdom of God, what had

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446. 'The New Testament writings are such a preaching [of Christ by the Apostles] come down to us, hence faith springs from them too; but in no sense conditionally on the acceptance of a special doctrine about these writings, as having had their origin in special divine revelation or inspiration.' (*CF* 128.2.593)

447. '... we shall state the parallel between the first disciples and ourselves equally well if we say that already, even when Christ was with them, and just because they were taken up into living fellowship with Him, they had the principle of new life, and had it not merely as susceptibility but also as spontaneous activity.' (*CF* 122.3.569)

previously been Christ's sole ability, and this approximation to the being of God in Christ in the community is the Holy Spirit.<sup>448</sup> Works written in the Apostolic age, then, were not as *texts* inspired, but the 'books only share in [the peculiar inspiration of the Apostles].' (CF 130.2.599) Their function is simply to 'exhibit the Redeemer in His habit as He lived' by reproducing his God-consciousness well enough to allow subsequent generations to approximate it in turn. (CF 130.3.601) The subsequent preservation of these writings in the Christian community is 'the work of the Spirit of God acknowledging His own products' in their faithful representation of Christ's God-consciousness. (CF 130.4.602) The attempt to understand the writings of the Apostles in the Christian community leads readers to the concept-forming power at work in Christ that the Apostles reproduced in recounting his words, deeds, and in their orientation of early Christian communities.

The fellowship-forming activity of Christ continues into the present day through the attempt by the various members of the fellowship to communicate 'whatever of Christ lives in him.' (CF 133.1.612) The given concrete circumstances of the fellowship provide the opportunity for the self-presentation of certain members of the fellowship, preachers, as an 'organ of Scripture' wherein 'the imitatively received movement of the self-presented person becomes in the receptively stimulated person a force that evokes the same movement.' (CF 133.1.613, 612) The imitation of this self-presentation leads to the development of Christ's God-consciousness in the receptive believer as she processes or metabolises the meaning of Christian preaching. The self-consciousness of the believer begins to harmonise with Christ's own self-consciousness, communicated

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448. *'The Holy Spirit is the union of the Divine Essence with human nature in the form of the common Spirit animating the life in common of believers.'* (CF 123.569)

through the community, as it expresses itself in thought and speech, and 'true expressions of Christian piety take shape.' (CF 131.2.606)

Christianity remains a language forming force bringing forth concepts capable of being filled out in knowing and doing through attention to Christ in his preaching preserved in Holy Scripture. So,

'[s]cripture now stands by itself, for its preservation unchanged guarantees in a special manner the identity of our witness to Christ with that originally given...And this witness alone, taken universally as the duty and calling of every member of the Church—and viewed provisionally apart from definite forms of any kind—is what is understood here by the phrase 'the Ministry of the Word of God.'" (CF 127.2.588)

Christ, then, is the common object of Christian concern and the Kingdom of God, established in Christ's person, the orientation of Christian piety. Believers attend to the modulation of feeling and formation of concepts in Christ, which is analogous if not equivalent to the formation of concepts by the flux of the universe, presented in the apostolic writings in order to recognise the relationships brought into reflective self-consciousness and to develop whatever new concepts are necessary in their present situation, i.e. to make judgments. The interpretation of Christian faith provoked by Scripture 'is the development, suited to that moment, of the genuine original interpretation of Christ and His work, and constitutes the common Christian orthodoxy for that time and place.' (CF 131.2.606) The whole orientation of piety, of Christian *Gefühl*, is the proper index and condition of the believer's ability to understand Scripture in thought, speech, and action.

### *B. Baptism*<sup>449</sup>

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449. Schleiermacher also treats 'the sacrament of the altar' [*dem Sakrament des Altars*], the Lord's Supper at length. (CG 139.1.378) The Lord's Supper works to fortify the community against the influence of the world by uniting personal devotion to Christ in the public act of the supper. In it 'the redeeming and fellowship-forming love of Christ is not only represented but made newly active, and in trustful obedience to which the sacramental action is ever anew

The formative power flowing from Christ to make believers adopted and forgiven children of God 'includes the guarantee of sanctification.' (CF 109.2 499) Sanctification makes use of 'the natural powers of the regenerate [to produce] a life akin to [Christ's] perfection and blessedness' for the creation of a 'new common life.' (CF 110.1 505) 'Hence the man in whom faith develops also has the desire to enter the fellowship.' (CF 137.3 631) Entrance into the fellowship is the reception of the believer into the church community through baptism as a 'seal of the divine grace.' (CF 137.3 631)<sup>450</sup> The outward sign of baptism, though, for Schleiermacher, is not sufficient for it to function as a seal or channel of divine grace.<sup>451</sup> The intention of the believer, conditioned by the need for redemption made known in Christ, must reciprocally relate to the outward sign of baptism.<sup>452</sup> The union of the

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performed.' (CF 139.2.640-641) The supper, therefore, represents a moment wherein the various members of the fellowship receive Christ's formative love and know others are receiving the same thing. The union with Christ leads to closer union with others through the definite form of the sacramental action, which frees it from 'dependence on changing personal moods and circumstances.' (CF 139.2.641) 'The one benefit of this participation [in the sacrament] is stated as being the confirming of our fellowship with Christ; and this includes the confirming of Christians in their union with each other, for the latter rests so entirely on their union with Christ that the union of an individual with Christ is unthinkable apart from his union with believers.' (CF 141.1.651) With regard to Christ's presence, he weighs the Zwinglian, Lutheran, and Calvinist views: the Lutheran: 'with the bread and wine Christ conjoined for participation the real presence of His body and blood, but only for the action of bodily partaking in both elements'; the Zwinglian: 'that Christ conjoined nothing with the bread and wine in themselves [but] merely spiritual participation in His flesh and blood with the action of partaking in the bread and wine'; the Calvinist: 'that while it is true that Christ conjoined something exclusively with the action of eating and drinking, this was not merely spiritual participation, available quite apart from the sacrament [but] was a real presence of His body and blood not to be had elsewhere.' (CF 140.4.649) The Zwinglian view is the clearest to understand but it has difficult accounting for why Christ chose this method. The Lutheran and Calvinist can account for the use of bread and wine, but the former comes to close to the Catholic while the latter opens up too much symbolism or external fascination. All affirm the strengthening of faith in Christ, which is the point, and Schleiermacher expects the development of a new view to develop in the Evangelical Church as the common doctrine.

450. Schleiermacher is here alluding to the Heidelberg Catechism qq. 69-72.

451. 'The meaning [of the creedal passages] is not that the outward performance works even in the faintest degree *ex opere operato*, whether by itself or in conjunction with the utterance of certain words... [baptism] works solely in union with the Word which ordains baptism for the Church and long with the Church, and which is uninterruptedly active in the Church through its whole extent.' (CF 137.3.632)

452. 'Here we may first of all distinguish between the action itself and the intention with which it is performed: the first by itself alone is only the external side of baptism, the second the internal; and since the alleged effect is something purely spiritual and inward, this means that the external action simply by itself cannot produce the effect, and the connexion between the two is mediated solely by the intention on which the whole is based... Only, the effect of the

outward sign of baptism, the church's ordinance established by Christ, and the inward desire of the potential believer is 'just that the Word must be known to the baptised person and acknowledged by Him.' (CF 137.1.629) Hence, infant baptism is only 'a complete baptism' when a further confession of faith is made in light of confirmation. (CF 138.1-2.635-637) The understanding of Christ in the believer is homogenous with the Scriptures, as 'the first member of a series,' as the individual element expressive of the common spirit of the Church.(CF 129.1.594-595) Full membership in the church and the regeneration of the individual are one and the same act so that a believer, once accepted in baptism, becomes a spontaneously active member of the church as the historical concepts of the community give direction to her own way of taking the world. (CF 114.2 531)

Belonging to the church, then, follows from the historical location of the believer, her concrete place in the flux of time, which is an expression of the single decree of creation, incarnation, and redemption. For the baptised and regenerate believer, the divine government of the world, previously experienced as omnipotence, holiness, and divine justice, now appears as election, God's separation of the church and believer from the world, and the communication of the Holy Spirit, 'the basis of the continuity of the Church's co-operation and interaction' in the individual. (CF 116.1.533) In his *Christian Ethics*, Schleiermacher puts it this way:

'[If] we consider the entry of the divine Spirit into this person, the entry of the Christian disposition, the Spirit is the analogue to the way of thought in the whole Christian church; as the individual recognises this way of thought, it is also in him, but only from the side of his communal consciousness, and then to begin it must always become personal in him before he can cease to be purely receptive in the church and begin to be productive in it.'<sup>453</sup>

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action does not depend on the intention being pure and unmixed, or on its always being definitely present to the mind of the person by whom baptism is administered.' (CF 137.1.627) 453. *Selections from Schleiermacher's Christian Ethics* ed. and trans. James M. Brandt (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2013). p. 121.



Blessedness begins in the believer as she takes on the language of the church as the inculcation of a way of being in the world, a disposition or attunement, historically available in the church's teaching—its form of life [*Lebensform*]<sup>454</sup>—and begins to communicate it to others.

## *V. Sanctification (Heiligung)*

### *A. The Work of Love*

The God-consciousness, the piety appropriate to blessedness, communicated to the believer, however, does not magically dominate the self-consciousness of the believer in an instant. It is not punctiliar. The union with Christ in the believer is an active obedience to Christ

'as His life was an active obedience of the human nature to the indwelling being of God within Him' developing through the believer's pursuit of her vocation through 'real discipline and enhancement of power.' (*CF* 112.1 519; *CF* 112.4 522)

The process of sanctification in the believer mirrors the propagation of actual sin in the believer by means of original sin. A believer in the midst of sanctification turns away from the form of life in the sinful community, the world apart from the church, towards the common life of the church community. Therefore, 'acts will occur within the state of sanctification similar to those common before regeneration, where what emerges is the power of the sinful common life, whereas

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<sup>454</sup> 'Unter der Lebensform ist heur nichts anderes zu verstehen, als die Art und Weise, wie die einzelnen Zeittheile des Lebens werden und sich aneinander reihen; und Selbstbewußtsein wird also betrachtet in seinem Uebergang in Thätigkeit, das heißt als Grund des Willens.' (*CF* 107.478 / *CG* 107.168.11-15)

the traces of preparatory grace lie deeply hidden.' (CF 110.2.507) Original sin becoming actual differs from sanctification passing into the believer in that sin was not allotted to individuals, 'each has his share in the common guilt and nothing is separately forgiven him', but in redemption sin has nothing to do with the common life, 'sin has its basis... only in the individual in so far as he still has something in him of the old common life of sin.' (CF 111.3.515) As an active being of God in human existence, the Spirit of the common life influences without itself being influenced and sanctification is 'a surrender which through the entire sphere of spontaneous activity has consolidated itself as a steadfast willingness to be controlled by [Christ].' (CF 110.2.507)

Unlike Christ, who developed perfectly in accordance with the being of God in him, the regenerate believer must struggle against the sinful habits, disposition, and language she has accrued in her lifetime.<sup>455</sup> The new form of life, the arrangement of the parts of time [*Zeittheile*] in the believer's self-consciousness, operates as the basis of the will turning away from the old way of being.<sup>456</sup> The *Gefühl* of the believer has developed over time as she has attended to her own concrete situation in her knowing and doing. A change in her feeling will, then, require a reconstruction of her feeling in time through precisely the same means of attention to her concrete situation.<sup>457</sup> The amount of reconstruction will depend

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455. 'From the beginning of His incarnation onwards Christ developed in every way naturally yet constantly and uninterruptedly in organic union with the indwelling principle of His life, and in its service. To no other who brings with him a personality that has shared the common life of sinfulness is this vouchsafed.' (CF 110.3.508)

456. (CF 107.478 / CG 107.168.11-15) See also '...in sanctification growth does not take place without a preliminary struggle between the old man and the new, this struggle cannot at any point in its whole course be viewed as an even advance to increase in the power of the one and decrease in the power of the other.' (CF 110.2.507-508)

457. 'That strength of the God-consciousness is not original; it is a gift which becomes ours only after sin has developed its power; and what has emerged in time can be removed in time only by its opposite.' (CF 110.2.507)

upon the degree to which her sensual consciousness has dominated her self-consciousness up unto this point:

'[I]f language develops in a person before he can take Christian disposition into himself in a living way, there must be a reconstruction of language and thought in him. This is so, for before this ensues, what is distinctively Christian in language is nonexistent in the individual, that is, in terms of content; and the church cannot do anything other than to assimilate the individual into the content of the church's language in order to elevate Christian disposition as a way of thought in him.'<sup>458</sup>

The disposition in the Christian will be the same as in Christ, a will for the Kingdom of God, and will be worked out in the same way, 'the actual pursuit of one's vocation,' as the achievement of the Kingdom of God. (CF 112.4.522)

The goal of sanctification, therefore, will be a change of disposition [*der Gesinnung Wandel*]; a holiness rooted in love not law: 'for love always is, and does, much more than law can be or do.' (CF 112.5 523/ CG 112.5..226.32-227.2) While Schleiermacher does not deny the need for the Evangelical Church to legislate 'in order to guide those who lack insight,' nevertheless, he denies the third use of the law, opposing the *Formula of Concord's* claim that good works 'conform to the law of God... which word [law] here has only one sense: the immutable will of God, according to which men ought to make the rule of their lives,' with a compound citation from Ephesians:

'[Christ] has abolished the law with its commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new humanity in the place of two, thus making peace...until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ.'<sup>459</sup>

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458. *Ethics* 121.

459. The *Formula of Concord* text Schleiermacher quotes in a footnote runs: '...observandum est, quando de bonis operibus agitur, quae legi Dei sunt conformia...quod hoc loco vocabulum legis unam tantum rem significat: immutabilem scilicet voluntatem Dei, secundum quam homines omnes vitae suae rationes instituere debeant.' The Ephesians text is cited in reverse order in the same sentence (2.15 and 4.13) with a quotation from 2.15: νόμος ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασι. All in CG 112.5.227.nn.4-5.

The evangelical commitment to a faith communicated through preaching without the imposition of an exterior law manifests itself again at this point in the *Glaubenslehre*. At no point does he re-establish a law over against the priority of God's being in humanity. The 'Christian self-consciousness [*christliche Selbstbewußtsein*]... determined through our faith in Christ is the general form [*allgemeine Form*] of our compassion [*Mitgefühl*] with human affairs and conditions.' (CG 113.3.232.7-10) Sanctification as compassion is the stature of Christ coming about in Christian believers as they receive their will from Christ: 'We find one passive condition [*leidentlichen Zustand*] posited as necessary, almost constant, in Christ, so that, in a sense, all his actions depend [*abhängen*] on it, namely compassion [*Mitgefühl*] with the condition of men.' (CG 97.3.82.16-20)<sup>460</sup> This compassion, as feeling *with* others, is Christ's way of taking the world, his way of reflecting on it in his own consciousness, so that when he communicates it to believers the feeling these human beings possess of the world, their *Gefühl*, comes into and directs their reflective self-consciousness as love, and love alone

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460. 'Insofar as Jesus expresses the divine, his self- consciousness is fully active in relation to the world, that is, he imparts his God- consciousness to others and thereby quickens the whole race. The perfect passivity of his self- consciousness in relation to God implies its perfect activity in relation to the world.

How is it possible that the divine love can be imparted perfectly to the self- consciousness of Jesus? How can his entire spontaneity and receptivity be so completely conditioned by the divine love? Schleiermacher's discussion in the Dialectic, explored above, provides the answer. The God- consciousness results from consciousness traversing a gap, a reflexive rift, as consciousness flickers from the pole of spontaneity to receptivity and back again. Insofar as consciousness comes to the recognition that it must traverse this gap, it recognizes that it is not itself the source of its own existence, but that it depends on something other than itself for its very being. In order for there to be a genuine divine influence on consciousness, however, it must occur at the moment that consciousness flickers from one pole to the other. It is in traversing the reflective rift that consciousness receives the divine influence, indeed, becomes one with it.'

Jacqueline Mariña *Transformation of the Self in the Thought of Friedrich Schleiermacher* (Oxford: OUP, 2008)pp. 205-206.

can be equated with the being or essence of God [*Sein oder Wesen Gottes*]. (CG 167.1.504.9)<sup>461</sup> They, then, suffer like Christ because they love like him.

### B. Prayer

The work of redemption accomplished in Christ reveals the attributes of God, known non-speculatively through reflection on the content of feeling [*Gefühlsgehalt*], to be preparatory manifestations of God's essence: love. (CG 167.2.505.5) Omnipotence, omnipresence, eternity, omniscience, holiness, and justice function as concepts allowing for an increasingly accurate understanding of God until the movement into Christian faith where these attributes give way to the essence of God. 'Love and wisdom alone... can claim to be not mere attributes but also expressions of the very essence of God...' (CF 167.2.731-732) Only love, however, comes in the self-consciousness of regenerate individual. Wisdom follows from the extension of the God-consciousness of the individual as she attempts to relate the elements of the world to each other and herself. The full expression of the being of God in the world is wisdom as the perfection of love.<sup>462</sup>

Schleiermacher demonstrates this dynamic in his understanding of prayer.

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461. The version of thesis 164 in the first edition of the *Glaubenslehre*, where it is thesis 180, makes this connection between the restored fellowship of man with God in the feeling of absolute dependence and the extension of that fellowship to others more explicit: 'When we trace to the divine causality our consciousness of fellowship with God as the feeling of absolute dependence through the efficacy of redemption so its content is the same as that the planting and expansion of the the Christian Church is the purpose of the divine world government.' [*Wenn wir unser Bewußtsein von der durch die Wirksamkeit der Erlösung wiederhergestellten Gemeinschaft mit Gott als Abhängigkeitsgefühl auf die göttliche Ursächlichkeit zurückführen: so ist der Inhalt desselben der, daß die Pflanzung und Verbeitrung der christlichen Kirche der Gegenstand der göttlichen Weltregierung ist.*] Compare with the second edition: 'When we trace our consciousness of restored fellowship with God through the efficacy of redemption to the divine causality so we set the planting and extension of the Christian Church as the purpose of the divine world government.' [*Wenn wir unser Bewußtsein von der durch die Wirksamkeit der Erlösung wiederhergestellten Gemeinschaft mit Gott auf die göttliche Ursächlichkeit zurückführen: so setzen wir die Pflanzung und Verbreitung der christlichen Kirche als Gegenstand der göttlichen Weltregierung.*] Both texts are from CG 584-585.

462. '...we do not say God is wisdom precisely as we do God is love; and the point is one which we can elucidate as follows...we have the sense of divine love directly in the consciousness of redemption, and as this is the basis on which all the rest of our God-consciousness is built up, it

The church remains an imperfect community wherein individuals have not reached the full stature of Christ. The imperfection of the church community consists in the remaining influence of the world on it, this occurs through the sin of its individual members, *and* its lack of progress in 'absorbing the world into itself.' (CF 146.1.668) The consciousness of this defective state, however, feeds into the desire of the church community to attain the end of Christ's own life, the kingdom of God, through the extension of the church. The desire for this execution of Christ's own desire manifests itself as prayer. In the *Glaubenslehre* Schleiermacher describes the dynamic of Christian prayer: the 'right anticipation [*Vorgefühl*]' which the church ought to have for what in its being together [*Zusammensein*] is salutary [*heilsam*] naturally becomes prayer.' (CG 146.417.118-20)<sup>463</sup>

The impulse for the correction and expansion of the church community in the present in relation to its future task is 'an effect of the divine Spirit.' (CF 146.1.669) Prayer in and for the church community does exist as personal prayer, but provides the place where the individual moves away from individual concerns or anticipations to find, instead, her work and purpose within the church community.<sup>464</sup> The communal activity of prayer in the church concerns the whole

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of course represents to us the essence of God. But the divine wisdom does not enter consciousness thus directly, but only as we extend our self-consciousness (as personal, but even more as species consciousness [*Gattungsbewußtsein*]) to cover the relation of all the elements of reality to each other.' (CF 167.2.732 / CG 167.2.506.1-14)

463. The Mackintosh translation inserts the word 'world' into the thesis giving: 'The right prevision which it befits the Church to have of what will be salutary for it in its coexistence with the world naturally becomes prayer.' (CF 146.668) The second edition of the *Glaubenslehre*, however, reads: 'Das richtige Vorgefühl, welches der Christlichen Kirche zu haben gebührt, von dem was ihr in ihrem Zusammensein heilsam ist, wird natürlich zum Gebet.' The Mackintosh translation, perhaps, follows the first edition where this sentence appears in thesis 162 as 'Es gebührt der christlichen Kirche ein richtiges Vorgefühl zu haben von dem, was in ihrem Zusammensein mit der Welt heilsam ist, und dieses wird natürlich zum Gebet.' The changes are compared in CG 578-579. I have followed the German of the second edition more closely in my own translation given in the text.

464. '...these things are done through the gathering together of individuals for common prayer; for through the very form common religious action each individual feels himself drawn away

condition of the church coming 'from the self-consciousness of the Church as a whole.' (CF 147.1.672) On this model, rightly offered prayer will be the attempt by the church to discern its practical activity in light of its circumstances insofar as the practical activity expresses Christ's ruling activity in the church. At no point does Schleiermacher countenance the possibility that prayer could 'exert an influence on God, His will and purpose being thereby deflected.' (CF 147.2.673) Any magical theory of prayer, where the creature could exert influence on the Creator, would conflict with Schleiermacher's basic presupposition [*Grundvoraussetzung*] 'that there can be no relation of reciprocal action between creature and Creator.' (CG 147.2.423.4-5) Not only would this destroy any possibility of absolute dependence in the creature, as well as the absolute vitality paradigm undergirding much of the *Glaubenslehre*, but it would render the 'imperishable and supreme value of the Kingdom of God' empty. (CF 147.2.673) The being of God at work in Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, the union of the being of God 'in the common Spirit of the Church', is absolutely and unalterably a *love* that cannot in the end be opposed.

As the divine love, the sense of love in the feeling of absolute dependence, the human God-consciousness, demands to be expressed. The divine being as love, like the human self-consciousness, expresses itself in its presentation and communication of itself. The plan or intention of this self-communication and self-presentation is divine wisdom: 'the divine wisdom is nothing but the highest being [*höchste Wesen*] viewed in this absolute, not composite but single and originally perfect [*ursprünglich vollkommen*], self-presentation and communication.' (CG

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from what is more personal in origin to that which could be same in all, and is guided by the content and meaning of such common action to that which lays hold on all equally.' (CF 146.2.671)

168.1.508.1-4) The dynamics of human experience previously encountered as God's restrictive activity, e.g. holiness and justice, are increasingly known by the regenerate believer as God's wise ordering of creation. Schleiermacher compares the order of the world in time and space with the idea underlying a work of art [*Kunstwerk*] or self-presentation. The world appears to 'our God-consciousness' as an 'absolutely harmonious work of art' perfectly expressing the being of God. (CF 168.1.733) The human awareness of the temporal events in the self-presentation develops as they are included not simply with resignation but with thankfulness in the communal consciousness of the church.<sup>465</sup> Understanding the way in which divine love is working in and on the world will mirror the attempt to understand the idea or wisdom behind any other work of art. The application of the self to the understanding of the world is the spread of the church as the place where God's love for the world has been historically expressed. '[T]he proper work of divine wisdom is precisely the spread of redemption' through the expansion of Christian piety into every aspect of human experience as 'the order in which election is carried out, and the regeneration of individuals as well as whole masses of humanity effected.' (CF 168.2.735) This expansion of the effect of the single decree, creation, incarnation, and redemption, is the goal of the wisdom of God, the world-government, that the Christian participates in through her feeling of absolute dependence brought about by Jesus Christ.<sup>466</sup> Prayer is the

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465. (CF 146.1.669)

466. In the first edition of the *Glaubenslehre* Schleiermacher makes this connection explicit: 'Wenn wir unser Bewußtsein von der durch die Wirksamkeit der Erlösung wiederhergestellten Gemeinschaft mit Gott als Abhängigkeitsgefühl auf die göttliche Ursächlichkeit zurückführen: so ist der Inhalt desselben der, daß die Pflanzung und Verbeitung der christlichen Kirche der Gegenstand der göttlichen Weltregierung ist.' [When we trace our consciousness of fellowship with God as the feeling of absolute dependence through the efficacy of redemption to the divine causality so its content is the same as that the planting and expansion of the the Christian Church is the purpose of the divine world government.] He changes the thesis to the following in the second edition: Wenn wir unser Bewußtsein von der durch die Wirksamkeit der Erlösung wiederhergestellten Gemeinschaft mit Gott auf die göttliche Ursächlichkeit zurückführen: so



acknowledgement of the efficacy of this wisdom and the yearning for its accomplishment.

## *VI. Conclusion*

In the course of the *Glaubenslehre*, Schleiermacher has progressively worked through the Christian self-consciousness by abstracting, applying, and moving past various concepts as they apply to the divine being. The goal of this conceptual work has been practical throughout:

'for we are now confronted with the task of more and more securing recognition for the world as a good world, as also of forming all things into an organ of the divine Spirit in harmony with the divine idea originally underlying the world-order, thus bringing all into unity with the system of redemption.' (CF 169.3.736-737)

The world, then, is the 'theatre [*Schauplatz*] of redemption' as the revelation of God in time and space. (CG 169.510.27-511.2) This realisation does not lead the Christian believer, for Schleiermacher, to expect any 'greater divine communication' than 'has been effected in the human race by means of redemption through Christ.' (CF 169.1.735) Instead, on the basis of the human self-consciousness, the piety or attunement of the self, made available in the life of Jesus Christ, the believer attempts to take the world as the revelation of God in line with the acutely visible revelation of the being of God in the Redeemer and the unfolding display of God's being in the church. The direction of life in the church is towards the world as the expression of God's being and good will. In the end,

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sehen wir die Pflanzung und Verbreitung der christlichen Kirche als Gegenstand der göttlichen Weltregierung. [When we trace our consciousness of restored fellowship with God through the efficacy of redemption to the divine causality so we set the planting and extension of the Christian Church as the purpose of the divine world government.]  
Theses 184 and 160, respectively, given on CG 582-583

'when through us the world is become fully ready for us, it will appear clearly that nothing can really *be* save as it is also an object of divine love.' (CF 169.2.736)

The world appears as the object of divine love twice: in Jesus Christ and the Spirit. The appearance of the world as the object of divine love occurs through the union of the divine essence with that part of the world capable of purposively relating to the world: human nature. The relation may not yet be known. It is *felt* in Christian piety as unity with God in Christ, and this feeling at the deepest level of the self leads to knowing and doing. The real union of the divine essence with humanity in the personality of Christ and the common spirit of the Church is, therefore, the teaching on which Christian doctrine [*kirchlichen Lehre*] 'stands and falls.' (CG 170.1.515.1-3)

'Now these exactly are the essential elements in the doctrine of the Trinity, which, it is clear, only established itself in defence of the position that in Christ there was present nothing less than the Divine Essence, which also indwells the Christian Church as its common Spirit, and that we take these expressions in no reduced or sheerly artificial sense, and knowing nothing of any special higher essence, subordinate deities (as it were) present in Christ and the Holy Spirit. The doctrine of the Trinity has no origin but this; and at first it had no other aim than to equate as definitely as possible the Divine Essence considered as thus united to human nature with the Divine essence itself... [therefore] we rightly regard the doctrine of the Trinity, in so far as it is a deposit of these elements, as the coping-stone of Christian doctrine.' (CF 170.1 738-739)

## Chapter 9. Conclusion

### *I. Introduction*

The stated goal of this thesis has been to read, investigate, and exegete the major theological works of Richard Hooker and Friedrich Schleiermacher to see how they attempted to develop responsible Christian speech answerable to their present time and the source of Christian piety, God. The motivation for this investigation was to see how Christian piety might be able to right itself theologically while undergoing major shifts in human understanding and culture. These major shifts precipitated by the dissonance between larger speculative accounts of reality, Troeltsch's world-picture [*Weltbild*], and the drive to find a liveable unity in a more personal sense of the world, a worldview [*Weltanschauung*]. The interrelation of a world-picture and a worldview, their continual criticism, reinterpretation, and re-evaluation, in the adjustment of life and thought was described, in the first chapter, as a pragmatic process of Re-Christianisation. This description was ventured on the basis of a formal similarity between the detachment of inherited cultural schemes from everyday life and the attempt to reground some inherited religious values in everyday life found in James' Pragmatism and the Reformation project of Re-Christianisation.

James's Pragmatism attempts to bridge the divide between empiricism, idealism, and religion through a three-fold practical evaluation of metaphysical ideas. An objective or empirical element affects a person who is disposed towards it by his or her habitual centre that is reflectively known in certain over-beliefs. The over-beliefs, inherited ways of thinking and describing one's self and world,

are evaluated by submitting them to the interaction of the subjective, the habitual centre of personal energy, and the objective, sensual consciousness of reality. The interpretive agenda or 'rules for action' of over-beliefs do or do not fit into the overall habitual centre of a person as he or she navigates objective everyday life, and this lack of fit indicates their lack of truthfulness. The truthfulness of a belief supplies a full fact by bringing together in relative harmony a person's sense of self, a felt object, and understanding or concept of that object. A full fact is religious, for James, when it becomes a way of describing the relation to a wider self of cosmic relations with objective consequences; it becomes a hypothesis of serious scale.

The Reformation project of Re-Christianisation was shown to make parallel moves to the more explicitly Modern pragmatism. The late medieval crisis of popular piety can be understood as the increasing distance between the regnant over-beliefs of Christian religion and the experience of everyday life, the detachment of larger interpretive schemes from the felt sense of self. A renewed piety was ventured by adjusting the inherited over-beliefs through a submission to the centre of Christian piety: Jesus Christ. By turning to the work of Christ below the loquacious level of the self, his affective touch on the believer, the interpretive schemes, practices, and rules for action of the existing culture, what Reformers described as 'pagan', were judged as insufficiently truthful or Christian when they did not fit within the dynamic inherent in Christian piety. The formative dynamic initiated by Christ's person and work was the sensible touch making possible the pragmatic verification of certain theological schemes. These schemes, having been submitted to this judgment, were then codified and handed on to others for their own formation, i.e. confessionalised. The rituals, confessions, and theologies of the

movement of Re-Christianisation worked when they fostered 'a synthesis of *scientia* and *sapientia*' through their appeal to *simplicitas* and *experientia*.<sup>467</sup>

Confessionalisation, however, raised the possibility that the Re-Christianisation process would need to be begun again, or pursued continually, if these new schemes detached themselves from a Christocentric piety or everyday life.

Re-Christianisation, then, is re-attachment of a socially constructed community, including its more abstract reflections, to Jesus of Nazareth, a historical man occupying a quasi-metaphysical position in relation to creation. The attempt to bring these factors together in a critical dialectic is not, however, the only option open to a theology faced with the detachment of everyday life from Christian piety. The church's directing doctrine can exempt itself from enduring the judgment of the world or unmoor itself from the historical demands of Jesus of Nazareth. These twin poles of enclosure or surrender of the reflective doctrinal system mirror not just the philosophical conundrums of James, or the theological options of Troeltsch, but Helmer's description of current theological trends. On the 'conservative' side, the epistemic advantage model of theology makes theology's internal coherence to be the only important test of Christian truth: it disconnects Christianness and truthfulness. In the 'liberal' camp, on the other hand,, a more thorough revisionism entirely hands over the doctrinal inheritance to the judgment of a contemporary system. Instead, by locating the relationship between God's determinative power and human receptivity of that direction in our pre-reflective life, it is possible to maintain the unity of Christian experience while maintaining the social construction of doctrine—its historicity—through an appeal to 'a reality beyond itself that social constructions attempt to convey.'<sup>468</sup>

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467. Heiko Oberman *Masters of the Reformation* p. 46.

468 Christine Helmer *Theology and the End of Doctrine* p. 160.

The historical impurity and social construction of the doctrine witnesses and testifies to the more basic unbrokered relationship between God and humanity that the doctrines seek to convey by locating themselves in the realm of inherent but incomplete sanctification. Unlike theologies that emphasise one side of classical pragmatism by assuming judgments of interior consistency to be enough, the pragmatic option inherent in Re-Christianisation combines a commitment to Christianness that takes seriously the judgments entailed by whether or not doctrine illuminates a person's experience and squares with other aspects of her life.<sup>469</sup> This adjustment will be possible not simply because certain cultural or philosophical problems have been overcome but 'by the will's formative surrender to God, who encounters us with his essence...in the revelation-history of the prophets through its culmination in Jesus, and from Jesus down to the present. Jesus is thus the centre of the redemptive self-revelation of God.'<sup>470</sup> God's causal turning of the will in Jesus Christ is ingredient in, presupposed by, and necessary for responsible Christian speech, whether newly Christianised or Re-Christianised, and this requires some point of contact. Against various conservative and liberal options, then, I have described attempts at Re-Christianisation presupposing, and presupposing as evangelically necessary, the fact that we are people capable of receiving revelation; we stand in the same position as the Apostles receiving Christ's preaching, in all its expansive power, as interruptive of our normal processing and creative of new ways of getting on with life. The indirect point of entry for this power is the formative surrender of the will, whatever calculations

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469. See David Tracy 'Lindbeck's New Program for Theology: A Reflection' *Thomist: A Speculative Quarterly Review* (July 1, 1985: 49.3) p. 470.

470. Troeltsch *Christian Faith* 63.

have gotten us there, to one who speaks with authority in the present time.<sup>471</sup> The denial of the ability of God to act presently on the believer in a way that makes a difference, to act magically in Schleiermacher's sense, blocks the possibility of Christian responsibility in the present.

The following chapters of the thesis have demonstrated a parallel material movement in each theologian's understanding of piety despite their formal, terminological, and cultural differences drawing on their commitment to the Re-Christianisation project through the practical verification or correction of Christian doctrine. The equivalent trajectory has been seen to follow on four aspects of their projects: a commitment to Reformation; an inadequate and sinful response to God's ordering of the world encountered at the pre-reflective level; Christ's re-ordering of the human habitual centre through his human life; the continued efficacy of this human life through God's agency in the present church. The development of piety, then, requires a certain attitude towards the world, the historic Christian community, and an attentiveness to everyday existence. All of these have been shown to be present in Hooker and Schleiermacher in their own way.

## *II. The Initial State*

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471. I have in mind here Stanley Cavell's description of Kierkegaard: 'What is admirable, exemplary, is [*Fear and Trembling*]'s continuous awareness of the pain, and the danger, of that silence—of the fear of the false word, and the deep wish that the right be found for doing what one must: what to my mind, Kierkegaard's portrait of Abraham shows is not the inevitability of his silence, but the completeness of his wish for directness, his refusal of anything less. Exemplary, because while we are stripped of Abraham's faith and his clarity, it is still his position we find ourselves in. For certainly we cannot see ourselves in Kierkegaard's alternative, we are not Tragic Heroes: our sacrifices will not save the State. Yet we are sacrificed, and we sacrifice. Exemplary, because in our age, which not only does not know what it needs, but which no longer even demands anything, but takes what it gets, and so perhaps deserves it; where every indirectness is dime-a-dozen, and any weirdness can be assembled and imitated on demand—the thing we must look for, in each case, is the man who, contrary to appearance, and in spite of all, speaks.' *Must We Mean What We Say?* (Cambridge: CUP, 2002) p. 179.

### A. A Reforming Community

As a matter of historical fact Hooker and Schleiermacher were both committed leaders of churches whose character was in some sense constituted by the European Reformation. The changes endured by the church in Europe, however, also necessitated the Reformation of that church into a cohesive body around the figure of Jesus Christ. For Hooker, these changes included the Reformation itself, the rise of Ramist logic, the new sciences and the unresolved heritage of Nominalism.<sup>472</sup> Schleiermacher lived in the shadow of political turbulence, including the French Revolution and the invasion of Prussia, ecclesial innovation, the church union in Prussia, and the theological response to Kant's philosophy by pietists, rationalists, and radicals forms. The need to maintain a degree of ascertainable order in the universe drove different theologians to either substitute a wholly new theology for the previously discredited one or to restrict theology in order to locate the source of order somewhere else. During Hooker's time, the former tactic could take the form of the Puritan insistence on the Bible containing the totality of knowledge or the later Anglican insistence on the use of natural theology developed in dialogue with the new sciences.<sup>473</sup> Schleiermacher contended with similar tactics employed by pietist, confessional, and rationalist theologians.

The responses of Hooker and Schleiermacher resisted these temptations to restrict theology to a science detached from the lived world of believers, to become

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472. Brad Gregory describes the continuity of the Medieval, Reformation, and Modern periods as the continual inheritance of a set of problems and questions in *The Unintended Reformation*. See especially the introduction pp. 1-24.

473. On the use of Natural Theology see Robert Boyle *Some Considerations Touching the Usefulness of Experimental Natural Philosophy* 1663 in *Anglicanism, the Thought and Practice of the Church of England: Illustrated from the Religious Literature of the Seventeenth Century* eds. Frank Leslie Cross and Paul Elmer More (London: SPCK, 1935) no. 89. Boyle responds to those who think that 'thorough inquiries into nature' are 'likely to end in atheism.'



Idealist or Rationalist in James' terms, or to discard the unity of the theological system entirely, to become empirical in James' terms. The temptation to restriction came when the previously regnant form of theology underwent significant changes during the Reformation and/or the Enlightenment. Reducing theology to a fixed, timeless system provided a means of interior integrity or missionary intelligibility when both of these were under serious threat. The existing symbolic systems, with their attendant epistemologies and political orders, were coming unhinged from the experience of people in Europe as religion was abstracted away from everyday life in order to ground itself in a distant sphere.<sup>474</sup>

Another option for coming to grips with these various shifts was to use new epistemological tools to articulate the universal relevance of Jesus Christ. This tactic involved a shift away from exhaustive mappings—Biblical, metaphysical, or scientific—in order to cast Christian theology as an interpretive enterprise in service of a meaningful project.<sup>475</sup> The tradition would be an interpretive enterprise within specifically defined historic communities of faith rather than a 'pure' finished system to be 'translated' into other arenas.<sup>476</sup> Schleiermacher's definition

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474. For this reading of the Reformation see Lindberg 49-50.

475. '[Scientific] knowledge must always have an incomplete character; even though it is knowledge of the totality, it is not total or exhaustive knowledge, nor ever could become so. The whole can be known only as a mystery which envelops us, into which our minds can reach only with an awareness that there are distances and dimensions which elude us.' Oliver O'Donovan *Resurrection and Moral Order* (Grand Rapids: Eedrmans, 1994) p. 79. H.R. McAdoo locates this move from systematisation to interpretation as a hallmark of the Anglican tradition beginning with Richard Hooker: 'But this criticism of a systematic theology came not only from Hooker, and from the Oxford group of rational theologians, from the Cambridge Platonists, and later from the Latitudinarians, but from Andrewes and from Laudians like Heylyn and Hammond, and from moderate writers like Sanderson. It is a striking demonstration of the self-awareness of Anglicanism, and it testifies to the widespread nature of the conviction that what was required was not theological systematisation but theological interpretation.' *Spirit of Anglicanism* (New York: Scribners, 1965) p. 19.

476. More and Cross *Anglicanism* xx 'What we have to look for in the ecclesiastical literature of England is not so much finality as direction.' Compare with, 'A liberal Protestant is one whose piety and sensibility join Protestant convictions about Bible, tradition, church, history, and truth with sustained attention to critical argument and scientific inquiries, a developed historical consciousness, and a commitment to social criticism and reform. This describes the stance of theologians such as Friedrich Schleiermacher... [b]ut it does not describe the work of more recent evangelical, 'postliberal', and 'postmodern' theologians, those who harbour deep

of theology in his *Brief Outline* illustrates the desired connection between it and the Christian community:

‘Theology is a positive science, whose parts join into a cohesive whole only through their common relation to a particular mode of faith, i.e., a particular way of being conscious of God. Thus, the various parts of Christian theology belong together only by virtue of their relation to ‘Christianity.’ This is the sense in which the word ‘theology’ will always be used here.’<sup>477</sup>

Theology, reflection on Christian piety, functions properly when it attempts to further the project of Christianity understood as the extension of sanctification in the Kingdom of God. It reflects on, criticises, and corrects *conventions* of a community in light of a given and fixed project. Hooker and Schleiermacher turned their interpretive, that is hermeneutic, theologies to Christology and the doctrine of justification rather than speculative metaphysical schemes. As modern thinkers, they advanced theologies, which despite being systematic in character, were not premised upon a *necessary* system of thought or the use of prescribed rules, but took shape as reflection upon the complex personal and symbolic relationships that make up actually existing Christian faith.<sup>478</sup>

There were Christological, soteriological, and evangelical reasons for the refusal to restrict Christian religion to a certain set of intricate doctrinal assumptions: it would not allow Christ to totally determine a human person if some

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suspicions about the Enlightenment and also tend to minimise the significance for theology of the findings of the natural sciences and some other disciplines.’ Douglas F. Ottati *Theology for Liberal Protestants* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013) p. 14.

477. *Brief Outline on the Study of Theology* §1

478. Brian Gerrish ‘Friedrich Schleiermacher’ in *Nineteenth Century Religious Thought in the West* eds. Ninian Smart, John Clayton, Steven Katz, and Patrick Sherry (Cambridge: CUP, 1985) ‘Christian theology is the sum total of the scientific studies and rules without which church leadership would be impossible: it is constituted as a distinct field, not simply by its content (although all the parts do have a common relationship to a particular mode of faith), nor by a uniform method, but precisely by its practical goal of equipping Christian leaders. Its main divisions are philosophical, historical, and practical theology; and dogmatics-surprisingly, at first glance-is assigned to the second division along with exegetical theology and church history.’ p.128. ‘To make salvation conditional upon a full and flawless apprehension or articulation of faith is thus to undermine the central Reformation principle itself, the priority of God’s active righteousness.’ Rowan Williams *Anglican Identities* 25.

aspect of his life was outside of Christ's redemptive work and it would restrict the scope of salvation to an intellectual elite. The person of Jesus Christ could provide a kind of unity to a modern world 'defined by a plurality of knowledges, which are the result not only of an exponential growth in the production of information, but also of a multiplication in the ways of knowing.'<sup>479</sup> Christ's work—the redemption he accomplished—was taken as relevant to all human endeavours and sciences. Their accounts of Christocentric piety continued the Reformation agenda of Christianising society by bolstering the effectiveness of the church's practices and confession in the midst of the large cultural shifts associated with the rise of Modernity. Their attempts to maintain the faith of the church were not seen as opposed to the developing emphases on reason and criticism, but were the handing on of the ecclesially given belief in the present.<sup>480</sup>

Hooker was, as Frederick Beiser has argued, the instigator of a theological project at the beginning of the English Enlightenment despite having no recourse to the founding figures of Enlightenment thought.<sup>481</sup> Hooker develops his view of the practical import of Christian doctrine through a combination of the agenda of the Reformation and a diverse array of traditional Latin theological sources.<sup>482</sup> Schleiermacher, however, operates after the initial birth of the Enlightenment and

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479. Oliver Davies *A Theology of Compassion* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003)4.

480. Despite the inventiveness of their thought, neither thinker wants to be a genius. 'We could not at all grant the name of Dogmatics to a presentation composed purely of original doctrines peculiar to itself. Even the earliest coherent presentations of the Evangelical Faith could only bear that name, in so far as they linked themselves to what went before, and had most of their system in common with was ecclesiastically given.' (CF 25.1.108)

481. 'If there is any single point that must be chosen as the beginning of the English Enlightenment, as the first glimmering of its dawn, then that would have to be the publication in 1593 of the first four books of Richard Hooker's *Of the Lawes of Ecclesiasticall Politie*.' F. Beiser *Sovereignty of Reason*, p. 46.

482. 'Yet, and this is the important point, Hooker can hardly be described as medieval any more than he can be called Thomist, though these are his sources and inspiration: doctrine is not copied and added to Anglican spirituality but absorbed into it.' Martin Thornton *English Spirituality* (Cambridge, MA: Cowley, 1986) p. 233, cf. pp. 224-226. On this point see Nigel Voak *Richard Hooker and Reformed Theology* and A.J. Joyce *Richard Hooker and Anglican Moral Theology*.

accounts for faith within the milieu of Kant and the *Frühromantik*.<sup>483</sup> The inherited metaphysics and cosmology that Hooker critically availed himself of is gone for Schleiermacher, and yet Schleiermacher will defend similar Christological and soteriological opinions in order to guard the continued viability of the Christian religion regardless of the metaphysics current at the time. The similarity arises because of a commitment to justification by faith that renders speculative metaphysical thought corrigible while insisting upon the positive value of human meaning making in constructing a 'high' Christology on the basis of the relationships constituted by Christ. The goal of their projects, despite significantly different appropriations of traditional doctrines, was the service of Re-Christianising their respective cultures.

These cultures, in turn, function in a similar way in both Hooker and Schleiermacher. Both theologians take understanding as the application of a received historically developed concept or conceipt to a given sensual range in act of judgment. The application either gratifies or expresses the desire of the person making the application of the concept, or using that concept to express themselves in some way, leading to a positive or negative judgment. The historical repertoire of a community provides each agent with a vector of approach to their sensual world, but this repertoire is capable of a degree of adjustment and expansion through the creative and spontaneous use of those concepts. The limitation of the agent through what is communally available to him or her is, when considered as moral failure of the community manifesting itself in the individuals own chosen action, the original sin of the community passing over into the actual sin of the individual.

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483. Kurt Nowak *Schleiermacher und die Frühromantik*. 43-47.

The rules or conventions of the Christian community became revisable inasmuch as they were understood to be historical products of certain men and women getting along in a certain time and place, inasmuch as they became historicised. Admitting the cultural nature of these received opinions, even when they are 'known' in the gut below the loquacious level, opens them up to revision in light of their variance with what is *demand*ed by a certain situation where witting agents feel their established repertoire fails. Despite limiting and directing action, these concepts or rules become 'merely conventional' to an agent so that, following Stanley Cavell,

'what I require is a convening of my culture's criteria, in order to confront them with my words and life as I pursue them and as I may imagine them; and at the same time to confront my words and life as I pursue them with the life my culture's words may imagine for me: to confront the culture with itself, along the lines in which it meets in me.'<sup>484</sup>

Refusing, or hesitating or questioning, to go along with a conventional rule in light of some other demand requires something capable of issuing an imperative overriding those conventions.<sup>485</sup> We do not like what some word or action says, what it leaves out or implies, in our participation in it because of its failure to articulate or instantiate the larger concern of some project such as Christian piety.

### *B. A Plain Sense of God*

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484. Stanley Cavell *The Claim of Reason* (Oxford: OUP, 1979) p. 125.

485. See Stanley Cavell 'This would suggest that we may think of the difference between rule and imperative as one between those actions (or 'parts' of actions) which are easy (natural, normal) for us, and those we have to be encouraged to do... This further suggests that what is thought of as 'alienation' is something which occurs within moral systems; since these are profoundly haphazard accumulations, it is no surprise that we feel part of some regions of the system and feel apart from other regions. ' *Must We Mean What We Say?* (Cambridge: CUP, 2002) pp. 25-26.

What is required for Hooker and Schleiermacher's projects to function is a dual sense of God's ordering power *as something present to all people* and the role of inherited forms of thought. Hooker and Schleiermacher both maintain the coherent unity of God's act in creation and incarnation, and the possibility of experiencing this act in the present day, of God's act calling for some sort of response. The experience is the historical and contingent vagaries of everyday life directing the doing and thinking of Christian lives as pious Christians learn to find themselves in the world. In both historical contexts, the Christian faith was tasked with the recovery of its meaningfulness after a time of increasing meaninglessness by interpreting its context as the place where response to God was possible. Meeting with this activity, learning to act in coincidence with it, involved turning the whole self in response to the world.<sup>486</sup> The ground of Christian unity, meaningful life together, and, therefore, *potentially* all human life together was, for Hooker and Schleiermacher, the asymmetrical act of God giving rise to the concrete attunement of human lives in the midst of the historical process.

For this monotheism, the One God is not simply 'the one unconditioned being,' but 'the one who acts in and through all things, not as the unconditioned by the conditioner.'<sup>487</sup> Such monotheising does not consist in the simple denial of polytheism or henotheism, although it is that, but the pursuit of the 'oneness of God' and the affirmation of the 'Integrity (ethical and ontological) of Reality.'<sup>488</sup> God's integrity and the integrity of reality are whole, complete, and actual regardless of their recognition by any denomination or group. God possesses a non-negotiable

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486. Their insistence on God's radical priority is the basis of their sapiential understandings of human life.

487. H Richard Niebuhr *The Meaning of Revelation* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2006) p. 96.

488. James Sanders *From Sacred Story to Sacred Text* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock: 2000) p. 187, p. 7.

relationship to all of reality capable of calling forth complete and total trust from the one who encounters God. The hermeneutic agenda at work in monotheising is the sort of dynamic that should be at work in Christian understanding as it tries to forge a unity out of its experiences.

The unity of human experience is located at pre-reflective levels of the experience of the integrity of reality by both Hooker and Schleiermacher. For Hooker, the pre-reflective experience of God's ordering of the world, the second eternal law, by voluntary agents is the same as the experience of unwitting agents of that law. The order of the physical world and the demands of the body unchosen by human agents are the result of God's ordering of the world that leads to reflective activity by voluntary or witting agents. The propulsive faculty moving through the human agent must and does begin in the appetite before it undergoes the modulation of the intellect before becoming the directed and articulate will. The natural pushes into the conventional with its attendant attempt to know God, who is plainly the orderer of all things. Like feeling in Schleiermacher, then, the appetite of the created agent is the point of contact with God, at least initially. The creature finds him or herself in this or that spatial and temporal location apart from any choice with desires, natural reactions and tendencies, given to him or her. The experience of order, regardless of cosmological, metaphysical, or explanations of that order, is basic to limited human creaturely life. The order possesses a moral character, even when that order is not explicitly acknowledged, directing the creature in his or her life.

The human agent attempts to make sense, to do and to think, on the basis of this feeling as it comes to expression in a community.<sup>489</sup> These communities form agents into their own natural reactions and understandings as these communities feel the weight of God's ordering power in creation, and they enable communication through language, gestures, and rituals on the basis of some degree of mutual attunement. This mutual attunement with others is the same attunement used to reflect on our relation to God and our interpretation of our location. The sense of an ordered creation, its objective density indifferent to human aspirations, does not require a cosmological explanation, though it may lead to one, but is a function of everyday ordinary life and language. A Christian who speaks, as Hooker and Schleiermacher both do, of God's holiness, justice, and wrath describes the integrity of reality impinging upon human life apart from any theoretical justification of that order.

The limited beginning of interpretation, its relation to specific concrete events calling for interpretation, does not require a limited ending: 'to the limited point of view of historic Christian faith a reality discloses itself which invites all the truth and devotion of finite, temporal men.'<sup>490</sup> God is responsible *for any and everything we encounter* including our enemies and evils we experience:

'[t]he impulse to monotheism must affirm the possibility that the Creator was fashioning a new thing, a new heart, a new spirit in his people, indeed was transforming his people, by wounding and healing, into a new Israel.'<sup>491</sup>

A monotheistic interpretation of these events insists on their integrity in light of God's oneness as Creator, Judge, and Redeemer without attempting to reduce God

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489. 'The unity [of Feeling, Knowing, and Doing] rather is the essence of the subject itself, which manifests itself in those severally distinct forms, and is thus, to give it a name which in this particular connexion is permissible, their common foundation.' (CF 3.3.8)

490. H. Richard Niebuhr *The Meaning of Revelation*. p. 11.

491. Sanders *From Sacred Story to Sacred Text* p. 103.



or God's relationship to the world to some particular occurrence. God has a wider cosmic relationship, and is not, therefore, a function of human ideas, systems, or conceptual schemes that do not grasp the whole flux of reality. This understanding of the relationship between God and the world preserves God's priority and the asymmetrical character of movement inherent in that priority. The pre-reflective relation to God does not, however, entirely pass over into the speech circulating in a given community

'while thought cannot proceed even inwardly without the use of speech, nevertheless there are, so long as it remains merely inward, fugitive elements in this procedure, which do indeed in some measure indicate the object, but not in such a way that either the formation or the synthesis of concepts (in however wide a sense we take the word 'concept') is sufficiently definite for communication. It is only when this procedure has reached such a point of cultivation as to be able to represent itself outwardly in definite speech, that it produces a real doctrine (Glaubenssatz), by means of which the utterances of the religious consciousness come into circulation more surely and with a wider range than is possible through direct expression.' (CF 15.1.77)

The 'fugitive elements' escaping the grasp of speech, what we 'confesse without confession' in silence (*Lawes* I.2.2 I.59.12-20), indicate the object, God, of this pre-reflective life to the agent in such a way that God is handled, as it were, without being entirely understood. The pressure of the object is not, however, a function of language but of causality felt pre-reflectively.

### *C. The Judgment of the Will*

The failure of the reflective knowing and acting agent to understand God, to understand what requires a response, is not simply an epistemic failure, but is, rather, a moral failure to respond to the will driving the integrity of reality. The order in which human agents fit, or ought to fit more seamlessly, is an order given in creation by God according to a definite purpose. Hooker describes this failure of

the human will to follow on from God's will in a given situation as a refusal of the voluntary agent to cooperate with the second eternal law at work in creation. This is a refusal to move forward with the canon of action appropriate to the end God desires for creation. The motivation for the refusal, though, is a preference for short-term goals fixed by the sensual desires of the agent as opposed to his or her proper orientation to higher goals learned through discourse. A relationship to God, a cooperation with Him in the end he desires to accomplish in creation, is refused by an agent who prefers his or her own purposes to a responsible act in a given context. The given context is not processed properly by the agent who does not have a proper sense of the situation, and so does not take this or that moment as a time when God's plan can be furthered.

'We are conscious of sin as the force [*Kraft*] and work of a time in which the direction [*Richtung*] of the God-consciousness had not yet emerged.'(CF 66.1.271/ CG 66.1.406) The direction of the God-consciousness does not occur in the agent insofar as he or she demands his or her freedom from responsibility to God in order to fulfil the *false* responsibility to a formative community whose sinful nature has not been acknowledged. A sinful community formed by the vagaries of human desires with its complementary false god does not, for Christian piety, command the total dependence of a Christian agent, but, nevertheless, tends to receive it. The inordinate desire of a sensual consciousness twists a higher consciousness into deforming the concepts of a community and an individual's sense of God:

'We cannot separate the two, for the one ever evokes the other; thus when in any social group, some definite form of appetite breaks out predominantly, it is presently followed by a transformation of the God-consciousness as a means of cloaking the discordance.'(CF 74.2.308)

Hooker's criticism of the Puritan project connects their desire for a precision of doctrine and a mapped out God with their desire to deny the character of their own providential location. They refuse to be responsible to their present by denying its integrity, and this is the dominance of the higher consciousness by desire. Hooker makes this comparison by showing how easy it is to distort a view of God because of material changes:

Yeat if we could reckine up as many evident clear undoubted seales of godes reconcyled love towards us as there ar yeares, yea dayes, yea howevrs past over oure heades, all thesse sett together have not such force to confirme oure faith as the losse and some tymes the onely feare of lozing a littyll transytory goodes credit honor or favor of men, a smale calamitie, a matter of nothinge to brede a conceipt and such a conceipt is not easily againe removed, that we ar cleane crost oute of godes booke, that he regards us not, that he looketh upon others but passeth by us like a straunger to whom we are not knowne...we ar hanged up lyke bottels in the smoke, cast into corners like the sheredes of a broken pott, tell not usse of the promises of godes favor, tell such as do reape the frute of them, they belonge not us, they ar made to others: The lord be mercifull unto our weaknes but thus it ys. (*Certaintie* V.79.30-80.19)

The proper response to this change in fortune, though, is not a denial of what one is confronted with—‘This pain is actually *good*’—or a denial of God's presence to it—‘God has not *really* willed *this*’—but the attempt to cooperate with this painful work: ‘Their thoughts are vain who think that their watching can preserve the city which God himself is not willing to keep. And are not theirs as vain, who think that God will keep the city, for which they themselves are not careful to watch?’ (*Certaintie* V.81.11-15) Whatever happens happens according to God's will such that it works for the eventual overcoming of the lack of a sense of God, but this lack of sense only ends when voluntary agents become conscious of their absolute dependence on God. Becoming conscious of this absolute dependence, and finally being free towards creation, in order to respond to God's will in creation requires a change in *both* the habitual centre of a human agent, the propulsive faculty of feeling in a willing agent, and in the discourse training that agent to live. What is

required is a definitive convening of the words and canons of a culture with a person who is naturally free from the sin of those conventions, free from the false conclusions of what sinfully seems natural.

### *III. The Difference Christ Makes*

#### *A. Work*

Jesus of Nazareth is the man who effects the crisis of cultural conventions capable of creating discourse appropriate to the human person through his obedience to the will of God. The double problem of the moral failure of communal life, original sin, and the personal distortion of the will, actual sin, to effect a full fact in the human agent requires the double solution of a discourse appropriate to human life and a will attuned to God's creative intention. If, following Hooker and Schleiermacher, the propulsive faculty of the human person, the habitual centre, must be re-ordered for human beings to act, think, and live responsibly in light of the integrity of created reality, then the change must occur to them *as human beings* at the level of will. The will must be retuned in the same way that it was tuned to begin with in order to allow for a greater approximation to a full fact. The order of the formation of discourse, personal and communal, moves from the fumbling and hunting of the appetite to the communal searching of language; feeling constantly passes over into knowing and doing. So the remaking of this human attunement follows the same order: the signal dominance of the will must reform adulterated discourse. Christ's work, therefore, takes the form of an often misunderstood obedience to the Father that produces a new sort of communal identity in those who grapple with it.

The personal identity of Jesus, as Hans Frei has pointed out, 'is centred on his moral action in moving towards a certain goal, rather than on his basic constantly unchanging yet constantly renewed self-understanding.'<sup>492</sup> Jesus Christ acts in the service of a given goal throughout his life that does not fit simply with any ready at hand historical options. He obediently enacts a mission given in Scripture (Luke 4.18-19) but addressed to him personally, 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon *me*' (Luke 4.18), so that the preaching of the kingdom is the purpose of his own mission, 'for I was sent for this purpose.' (Luke 4.43) Although Christ learns obedience through suffering, he does so in line with his own basic orientation to the world, the intention of his will, in order to express and effect the will of God. (Hebrews 5.8) The movement from intention to enactment is the movement from appetite or feeling to an outward act, in deed or speech, expressive of that intention in a given context. The personal canon of action present in an agent's feeling does not reveal itself by simply following a rote script but, instead, by acting contextually to reveal itself *in this given situation*, voluntarily and non-arbitrarily. This correlative meeting of situation and action defines the agent and the situation through the agent's interpretation of the situation. Jesus, as a human agent, imposes a meaning on his situation by bringing it into God's loving intention, by holding it there without any wavering. Most especially the circumstances of his execution are not a meaningless imposition on or ruination of his work, but the context where he willingly effects and expresses the will of God. Christ lays down his own life: 'No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father.' (John 10.18) By taking the world in this way, Christ brings an

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492. Hans Frei *The Identity of Jesus Christ: The Hermeneutical Bases of Dogmatic Theology* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975) p. 108. The exegesis here follows Frei quite closely.

unacknowledged law, the law of his being, into the clashing laws of human society forcing them to acknowledge him even if in ironic reversals. 'Now Jesus stood before the governor; and the governor asked him, 'Are you the King of the Jews?' Jesus said, 'You say so.' (Matthew 27.11) The inability of even those close to him to understand him evinces how deeply he is constraining existing language, concepts, and rituals to accommodate the new reality of his own self. (Mark 8.29-34) The chain of original sin is broken through the spontaneous, voluntary, and non-arbitrary character of Christ's will that is 'supernatural' in relation to the 'natural' prejudices of established discourse.

The obedient work Christ has been sent to do is the work of the cross. In different ways, Hooker and Schleiermacher both place the cross centrally in the work of Christ. The cross, however, is not a straightforward sacrifice for either of them. It is the final overcoming of sin, the dominance of the higher by the lower self-consciousness, in deed and in historical occurrence. Their theories of Christ's work on the cross operate within an Anselmian framework wherein the sin of human agents demands either 'the honour which has been taken away should be repaid, or punishment should follow' from human sin.<sup>493</sup> Humanity must act in accordance with God's will, which is what human agents owe [*debere*] to God as rational creatures, or else deal with the moral consequences of that failure.<sup>494</sup> So a human agent who acted in accordance with God's will would not merit the consequences of sinful humanity.

These factors converge on Christ as he sets his face towards Jerusalem and his death outside the city: the necessity of obedience to God's will, the suffering

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493. Anselm *Cur Deus Homo* I.13; See also I.11.

494. Anselm *Cur Deus Homo* I.11: 'B. Quod est debitum quod deo debemus? A. Omnis voluntas rationalis creaturae subiecta debet esse voluntary dei.' vol. 3, 67.

cost of humanity's moral failure, and the overcoming of the lower by the higher self-consciousness. God's will is love, the will for the salvation of the world more ancient than creation. For Christ to act in accordance with this first eternal law is for him to love creation as such and as it is. As a sinless man, Jesus of Nazareth loves sinful creation to the point of being willing to endure the suffering it has created for itself through sinful lives. The fear of death and suffering by human agents is the most fundamental sensual appetite in them that can overcome the higher consciousness; self-preservation is the basic impulse leading to human discourse. The work of Christ, then, is the will to die on behalf of others in contradiction of the basic impulse of self-preservation in obedience to the objective will of the Father in creation. In this way Christ knows the world for what it is, beloved by God, and, therefore, morally experiences the full fact of creation.

Living and dying for others according to the will of God, then, is both a radically obedient act, i.e. to the will of the Father, and a radically asymmetrical act, i.e. in contradiction of natural pressures. The asymmetrical character of Christ's act in living and dying for others locates his own personal identity, the habitual centre of his action, outside the normal push and pull of human character formation. The location of the formation of Christ's identity is the eternal life of God. His work pushes toward an understanding of his person as eternally or asymmetrically constituted in and by the one who constitutes the integrity of reality. He possesses the same uncompromising character as the one whose indomitable power is responsible for experience: 'absolute causality is experienced and presses for expression in diversity of language; [t]he two coincide—the place of experience and the origin of effability.'<sup>495</sup>

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495. Gerhard Ebeling 'Schleiermacher's Doctrine of the Divine Attributes' p. 139.

*B. Person*

Christian theology, as a kind of Christian reasoning, comes about through the believer's encounter with Jesus Christ. The saving encounter with Jesus Christ, though, does not take place in isolation, but, rather, implies a wide range of human experience and activity within the world. The reconciliation brought about by Christ, precisely because it is *reconciliation*, seems to require some understanding of creation and God as creator and the world as his creation. Included within this is an interpretive framework made up of conceptual connections between the ideas of creation, God, and Christ. Herbert McCabe straightforwardly states the matter: the relation of God and creation 'has to be [worked out] prior to the fullest understanding we can have of Jesus. Our use for the word [God] does *not* begin with christology' so what we mean by calling Jesus the Son of God depends on what the word 'God' means.<sup>496</sup> Christ may be the one who begins the questioning central to the Christian experience of salvation, but he does so within a conceptual matrix already loaded with numerous conventions for understanding 'God'. An exploration of the generative moment of Christian salvation will, therefore, begin with these prior uses of 'God' as well as the view of creation implied by this definition, before moving on to the results of modifying this definition with assertion of Christ's divinity.

God statements, as monotheistic statements, do not simply place Christ at the centre of an available, mapped area of religious concern, but rather place him at the centre of all theological concern. The prior use of the word 'God' is not simply

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496. *God Matters* p. 42.



defined by previous Old Testament usage, instead 'the post-Resurrection Christ attracts to himself (Jesus Christ) the whole spectrum of religious concerns in Mediterranean (and later European) civilisation' since we are 'simultaneously activating the Israelite God-tradition and any others we have become acquainted with' when we say 'Jesus Christ'.<sup>497</sup> Christianity, then, does not involve the creation of a new and purified language for Christian concerns, but, instead, focusses and at times exacerbates the tensions at work in already existing languages. Cornelius Ernst describes the process in this way:

'the historical event of the genesis of Christianity involves not, in general, a new language in the sense of a new vocabulary, but the transformation and recreation of languages already in valid use.'<sup>498</sup>

The prior use of the word God, which shows the possible scope of transformation effected by Christ, does not involve a single tradition, e.g. Hebrew religion, but consists in the diverse uses of God-talk in various contexts that are condensed in Jesus Christ.<sup>499</sup> While the Israelite tradition takes the lead in this in this dynamic, a monotheistic concept of God critically incorporates the gods of other nations so that our experience of salvation, what makes us talk about Jesus Christ as God, creates an increasing number of situations where talk about God makes sense by pointing to this centre of human concern and meaning making.

So, as an alternative to a henotheistic view, monotheism is a view where God is *not* contained within a single structure of meaning, but, instead, is free from any specific worldly determination. Even, for instance, his presence is a presence-

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497. Cornelius Ernst, *Multiple Echo* p. 50.

498. Ernst *Multiple Echo*., p. 33.

499. 'The Claim that 'Jesus is the Christ' condenses or focuses any God-experience we may have, i.e. the whole irregular network of God-languages we might or might not be prepared to bring into play. The word 'God' has to be allowed to behave freely in *different* contexts, and to *link* these contexts, both the contexts we are familiar with and any others which we may encounter in some the future (this is a way of indicating the 'transcendence' of God).' Ernst *Multiple Echo*, p. 50.

in-absence wherein God must hide himself so that he is 'sovereignly free and transcendent gift.'<sup>500</sup> God cannot be within the world of human meaning as a part of the furniture precisely because he is the source of those meanings coming into existence at all. In other words, God is Creator and therefore a hidden God. To speak of God as Creator in this way is to refer all creation to him in a way completely different from the way creatures refer to each other.<sup>501</sup> To locate creation's unity in the Creator is not to provide an explanation but to refer all things to 'an ultimate meaning, the Meaning of meaning, God.'<sup>502</sup> From an interpretive standpoint, God cannot be assimilated into an agenda, converted into an easily available harmony, or posited as human explanation. God cannot be assimilated into our meaning making in any uncomplicated way, if at all, so that talk about God is necessarily critical talk.

'[T]he conceptualising of God creates a frontier *behind which* God is and *this side of which* I am. So my life, which is a complex built-up system of habits, of arrangements, of blind-spots, of complacency, of 'resentment', is, in principle, shielded from God by the concept that encloses him.'<sup>503</sup>

Jesus Christ, however, does not stand behind this frontier. The 'real existence of God in Him' sets him apart from other human agents as a unique relationship, 'in virtue of this difference, there is in Him everything that we need, and, in virtue of His likeness to us, limited only by His utter sinlessness, this is all in Him in such a way that we can lay hold of it.' (CF 96.3.397)<sup>504</sup> The effects of Christ on his followers, what we lay hold of in him, demands that he is included

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500. Ernst *Multiple Echo* p. 36.

501. See Rowan Williams *On Christian Theology* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000) pp. 67-69.

502. Cornelius Ernst *Multiple Echo*, p. 79.

503. Sebastian Moore 'Some Principles for an Adequate Theism', *The Downside Review* 95, 1977. pp. 201-202.

504. 'Schleiermacher wants to hold to the confessional theorem that in Christ we meet one person in two natures. He believes, however, that subsequent ontological explanation of the formula is marred with difficulties and ripe for revision.' Edwin Chr. van Driel 'Schleiermacher's Supralapsarian Christology' *Scottish Journal of Theology* August 2007 260.

within the identity of the one God responsible for creation. Christ's fixed character as one who actively, willingly, and indomitably loves is his transposition into history of the active, purposeful, and irresistible love that God is. The one God, moreover, possesses this character apart from its historical manifestation or actualisation in the created world. For Schleiermacher, the human flesh of Jesus is 'the organism for this fundamental power, and is related to it as the system which both receives and represents it, just as in us all other powers are related to the intelligence.' (*CF* 96.3 397) The human person, with all those faculties requisite for a human agent, is the communication of God, his Word, in consciousness by means of the flesh. This expression of God in the flesh, even as it is only assimilated into other consciousnesses piecemeal, is truly God. The character or content expressed in this Word is God's love in the form of suffering. If, then, this is to be a true and forceful expression of God's character it will be necessary to find this suffering form, or one whose character is appropriate to suffering, in God Himself or else it would be constituted by human agents in a symmetrical fashion. The Son, as Hooker argues, is a receiver. The receptive character of his person depends on his reception of himself from the Father, and it is just this receptive character that determines Christ's earthly life as one of obedience. The Word is 'three degrees a receiver,' each degree instantiating his character:

'first, in that he is the Sonne of God; secondlie, in that his humaine nature hath had the honour of union with deitie bestowed upon it; thirdlie, in that by meanes thereof sundrie eminent graces have flowed as effectes from deitie in to that nature which is coupled with it.' (*Lawes* V.LIV.1 II.220.23-27)

Only this sort of person, one actively sympathetic with all people unto the point of death in obedience to the will of God, could have performed the sort of works he performed according to a purpose fixed in the being of God.

In his essay on theological methodology, Ernst sets up the central concern of *Christian* theology in this way, the

‘thesis [of this essay] is that this centre [of concern] is the claim, 'Jesus is the Christ'. It is to be noted that this thesis is not merely the statement, p, say, 'Jesus is the Christ', is the centre of theological concern, but that this centre is constituted by the claim that p is the centre of theological concern.’<sup>505</sup>

The statement itself involves claims about a specific historic individual, Jesus of Nazareth, who is in some sense outside of the normal structures of meaning in the world, is Christ or Lord. The generative force of Christianity comes about through the creation of tension within certain frames of reference in order to open them to a continued questioning expansion on the basis of some foundational event. In the case of Christianity, though, this past event is *in some sense* still accessible in the present. Entering into this questioning is how theology learns to speak about God, how it finds itself authorised. As the source of an infinite effability, Jesus Christ is placed within the identity of God as constitutive of the Godhead. *That* taxis of relations constitutes the one who comes into the world to constrain, break, and found the discourse of the world as a source of meaning, a man with a unique will always passing over into doing and speaking in a new way. Encountering Christ, then, is encountering the one responsible for the integrity of the world within the world itself. The divine identity and the human person are coincident in him.

#### *IV. The Present Power in the Church*

##### *A. The Present Power in the Church*

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505. Cornelius Ernst *Multiple Echo*, p. 48.

Thinking of Christ in this way locates him within two orders. He exists within the normal historical order like any other person, but *as that historical person* he 'constitutes a fixed and a vanishing point, to which all other orders of meaning have to be referred.'<sup>506</sup> Whatever concepts Christians develop must, therefore, allow the Christian life to be vulnerable to God's reshaping action.<sup>507</sup> If, however, God does transform and recreate human beings then any concept shielding concrete human life from him is inadequate; it is insufficiently Christian. The concept must allow for some of from of transformative testing or verification, i.e. its pragmatic truthfulness. *Doctrine, what the church teaches, will be those concepts, over-beliefs, and rules appropriate to a cultivation of a person's habitual centre that are at the same time submitted to continual testing in the experience of believers determined by Jesus Christ.* Christ takes the place of an almost metaphysical principle, to the degree he holds together the wide range of human experience grounded in the push and pressure of the cosmos. Taking Christ in this way does not simply add a symbolic layer to the world or alter its expression:

'[the world] must have, over and above the altered expression, *a natural constitution* different at some point from that which a materialistic world would have. It must be such that different events can be expected in it, different conduct must be required.'<sup>508</sup>

The unity of a world worked out through this sort of Christian hermeneutic would not, then, be the unity of a semantic or symbolic system held in mind but the

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506. Ernst *Multiple Echo* p. 56.

507. '[T]he conceptualising of God creates a frontier behind which God is and this side of which I am. So my life, which is a complex built-up system of habits, of arrangements, of blind-spots, of complacency, of 'resentment', is, in principle, shielded from God by the concept that encloses him.'

Moore 'Some Principles for an Adequate Theism' pp.. 201-202.

508. William James *Writings: 1902-1910* pp. 463-463.

practical holding together of the diverse range of human experiences in the objective personality of Jesus Christ.<sup>509</sup>

The practical holding together of this unity throughout diverse cultural, political, philosophical, scientific, and religious contexts is the pragmatic verification of the fact that Christ

'is the image of the unseen God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.' (Col 1.15-20)<sup>510</sup>

The lifelong verification of this unity in thought, word, and deed is Christian piety as the effect of this fact about Jesus Christ. This long-term project of verifying the unity of the world in light of God's summons to responsive action is the proper location of Christian doctrine as the pragmatic truths of the Christian community.

Concepts like joy, peace, forgiveness, and repentance assume certain ways of relating to the world and to other people. Subjects who lack such a sense of relation will need a 'fairly intensive and thoroughgoing education in human existence' if they are to explain or even comprehend the objective claims of Christianity, i.e. to judge or think from Christ's effects.<sup>511</sup> For instance, an

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509. 'Theology, while continuing necessarily to practise the onto-theo-logical mode in which its formulations have been uttered historically, must become explicitly aware of its own existence as a kind of meta-theology; the theological epistemology corresponding to this meta-theology would be an explication of the 'meta', the dimension of this meta-theology in the historical process of ontological meaning.' Ernst *Multiple Echo* p. 85.

510. NRSV translation altered. cf. 'We have to ask what is the *meaning* of this historic succession of theologies (and of the sterile repetition of unimportant variants), and we have to ask this question not within a presupposed perspective of any one of them but ask it radically as part of *the* theological problem of the meaning of God and man for one another. The substantive ('ontic') answer to this question we have already in Jesus Christ, and can have no other. It is the ('ontological') meaning of this substantive meaning we must continually search for without expecting any final answer.' Cornelius Ernst *Multiple Echo* p. 85.

511. Wood *The Formation of Christian Understanding* p. 25. I am not saying that one needs to be personally committed to Christianity for it to make sense, or that Christianity is unique in

understanding of the claim about human beings that since 'all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; they are now justified by grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a sacrifice of atonement by his blood, effective through faith,'(Romans 3.23-25a) cannot be reasonably articulated apart from a sense of self capable of understanding guilt and redemption. The Christian develops an inner conscious and attitude towards the world through her education in Word and Sacrament and the community they found so that the felt object comes to her as a means of knowing God. The basis of this acknowledgement, however, comes from a determination of the Christian's place in history by God, a process over which the Christian has no control.

Regardless of whatever historical and existential situation has made these concepts available or attractive to the Christian believer, they will still need to be applied in the present situation to ascertain their truthfulness. The unity of truthfulness and Christianness, when considered pragmatically, requires a relationship between the determining or limiting power of the world *and* of Jesus Christ: the felt object. The inability of any human discourse to entirely metabolise the person of Jesus Christ is, in Schleiermacher's terms, a function of his archetypal [*urbildliche*] rather than exemplary [*vorbildliche*] character in the Christian community. Jesus does not and cannot simply embody the desires, wishes, and hopes of a Christian group—an idol can do that—but constrains their desires, wishes, and hopes in approximation to the will of God. The given of God in creation and in Jesus Christ is that perfect presence slowly becoming inherent in human agents through their increasing approximation of his person: the directing

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these requirements of understanding. Someone who has no sense of guilt will simply not see the point of the exercise. Someone, however, who does have a sense of guilt may find Christianity lacking while still seeing what the fuss is about.

force sanctifying Christian agents. Dealing with Christ as archetype is the same as attempting to deal with God in the integrity of reality. The conventional criteria, over-beliefs, and ecclesial norms of the Christian community are appropriated through an existential education of the believer. They remain because of the fact that they work to make sense of the stream of human experience felt in the push and pull of the world. The continuity of these over-beliefs with the affective experience—what is below the loquacious level—of being determined by Jesus Christ in a person's habitual centre judges the Christianness of those over-beliefs.

### *B. The Spirit Following*

Christian piety must, then, be determined below the loquacious level in such a way that it can grasp Jesus Christ. The education of the Christian believer into the formative regime of Christian piety fluctuates as he or she approximates to Christ's habitual centre in the contexts of his or her life. This grasping and releasing of Christ is the believer's sanctification in the cultivation of an inherent but imperfect righteousness. The Christian life, however, begins with the radically asymmetrical act of justification or regeneration wherein the believer turns from an old life, its habits, prejudices, desires, etc., to the new life of the church *without yet being skilled in the discourse of that body*. The decision cannot, therefore, straightforwardly be an informed decision but a receptive act. This structure of acting from a changed feeling mirrors the structure of Christ's own life where his God-consciousness determines his actions apart from his contemporary social conditioning after the initial act of union. As an act impossible apart from the historical life of Jesus Christ, the turning of the human person in conversion is 'the *speciall* operation of Gods good grace and Spirit.' (*Lawes* III.8.6 I.223.16-17) The



grasping of the concept or the story is not enough apart from an accompanying change in will.

Hooker illustrates this point in the *Lawes* through the story of Festus of in Acts 25-26.

*'Festus, a mere naturall man, an infidell, a Romane, one whose eares were unacquainted with such matter, heard [Paul], but could not reach unto that wherof he spake; the suffering and the rising of Christ from the dead he rejecteth as idle susperstitious phancies not worth hearing. The Apostle that knew them by the spirit, and spake of them with power of the holie Ghost seemed in his eyes but learnedly mad.'* (*Lawes* III.8.6 I.223.20-26)

The Holy Spirit operates by bringing the dead and risen Christ to believers in such a way that his will passes over into their lives making them obedient to God. The work of the Spirit, as God's work, is an absolutely vital work effected as an aspect of the single act of God: the decree of justification more ancient than creation. As part of the decree of justification, the *special* operation of the Spirit does not differ from the singular divine causality responsible for creation. The divine causality formative of creation impinges upon the believer, who is part of that causality, at the level of feeling. The Spirit conforms the believer to the reality of Christ through the entirety of the created causality as it meets within his or her feeling, the receptive consciousness passing over into knowing and doing. Just as in the moment of union in the incarnation, the created causality combines in such a way that something new occurs. The Christian agent becomes free, spontaneously free, to act in harmony with his or her context in obedience to God such that any previous cultural formation, as with Christ, is providentially necessary but insufficient to account for that act. Having changed at this most basic level, the law of the Christian agent begins to approximate the second eternal law through the operation of the first eternal law on him or her.

Talk of the Spirit, therefore, will be as conceptually elusive as talk of creation or incarnation insofar as it simply describes a facet of the single act or decree of God. This descriptive difficulty does not prevent a serious and meaningful acquaintance with the Spirit in its effects. One does not need to be able to talk about the Spirit, and excessive talk may be obfuscatory, to relate to that Spirit's effects in life: 'every effect doth after a sort conteine, at least wise resemble, the cause from which it proceedeth.' (*Lawes* I.5.2 I.73.7-8) The presence of God, made known as love in Jesus Christ, in the church causing the activity of love to take place in the church is his essential presence to the church. The coming to be in time of that essential presence of God to humanity is, like the incarnation, not the constitution of a new identity in God but the expression in time of his self-constituting decree as the recognition in word and deed of his Word, Christ whose glorified body retains 'in it the scars and marks of former mortality.' (*Lawes* V.LIV.6) As a human recognition of this divine and human address, or a divine address through this human organism, it is the recognition occasioned in human agents by a body, Christ's body, present, vital, and forceful as a causative power, however one wants to account for it.

#### *V. The Hermeneutic of Piety*

How then, to return to Troeltsch and James, can Christian believers, after times of great changes, find responsible speech answerable to their present situation? Given the fracturing of inherited world-pictures, metaphysical schemes,

and cosmologies in their conflict with their emerging counterparts, Christian believers are faced with the possibility and task of producing a new worldview on the basis of an encounter with God's essence. A pragmatic attempt to construct, or reconstruct as the case may be, a Christian worldview does involve the testing of received Christian doctrines, but, more importantly, it begins with an experienced touch of encounter that these concepts, teachings, and stories are applied to in order to come to grips with the push and pull. The place of Christian reconstruction, then, is, as Schleiermacher insisted and Hooker resigned himself to, not the parsing of concepts but 'Christian Dogmatics must somehow go back to the divine causality, since [doctrines] are only meant to explain the feeling of absolute dependence.' (*CF* 50.3.198) The formative surrender of the will to God, resignation of the self to God's wisdom, manifests itself in the correlative expressions of knowing and doing under the pressure and constraint of this definite will.

The formative touch of God's will does not appear as a blank but as a historically particular, and so particularly constraining, man: Jesus of Nazareth. The point of contact between the directive divine will and the creation resultant of that will is the body of Jesus Christ. The absolute vitality paradigm of Schleiermacher and Hooker's justification paradigm of productive imputed righteousness describe this dynamic of God's act in Jesus Christ. The initial union or imputation produces, by means of the human will, a temporal and historical approximation of the divine will. The density of Christ's life stands over against the church community constantly being produced by his presence such that he cannot be either entirely metabolised or done away with by the community. Specific historical actions taken by Christ, as the actions of this still living man, will direct the community responsible to him who understands itself to be an

inadequate manifestation of his person. The primary conceptual work of Christian formation, then, will be in coming to understand this directing, forceful, and constraining presence as the one described by the Christian community in Scripture and ritual. Learning to describe, to recognise, this power as Jesus Christ is not learning to use a technical, metaphysical, or cosmological apparatus, but an *ordinary* language. The reality and integrity of this given, Christ in his historical density, can only be identified by 'following' in the present this inherited ordinary language with our own representations while assuming 'they [are] accountable to something more than their own inner logic or the convenience of the speaker,' something beyond and antecedent to our understanding.<sup>512</sup>

When talking about Jesus, Christians want to claim that Christ and his activity, his person and work, are the centre of human knowing and doing. He is, in James' terms, placed 'into wider cosmic relations' by his followers so that the possibility of testing this relation comes into view.<sup>513</sup> This testing is the evangelically necessary attempt to bring Christ to bear on human lives as the one who can enable them to act according to God's will. The presupposition is that the ordinary descriptions of Jesus Christ in the Scriptures and the sacraments can be understood by other cultures, worldviews, and cosmologies because of their applicability to a force at work in all human lives, the hard edge of divinity. The recognition of *this force* as the presence of Jesus Christ, the body from Nazareth, will not, then, suddenly bring a new experience but make sense of the ordering power always already present in created lives.<sup>514</sup> If this is the case, though, the only

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512. Rowan Williams *The Edge of Words* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014) p. 77.

513. William James *Writings: 1902-1910* p. 462.

514. 'How am I to know that everything I in fact encounter in my existential experience of myself (the ultimate yearning, the most profound inner dispersion, the radical experience of the universally human tragedy of concupiscence and death) does in fact fall within the realm of my 'nature', and would also exist, exist in just this form, if there were no vocation to supernatural

possible verification of this claim would be 'a total human culture' produced by finding 'a single human identity in Christ' in the various attempts to come to grips with this ordering power rather than linguistic or conceptual uniformity.<sup>515</sup>

Writing to the Corinthians, the Apostle Paul admonishes the recipients of his letter that they have fallen under the influence of apostles who seem to be leading them away from the example set by Apollos and himself. Paul is a true apostle as a 'steward of God's mysteries' who is trustworthy in his appointed task of handing on those mysteries. (1 Cor 4.1-2) Holding on to these mysteries requires Paul to be at odds with the normal ways of human judgments. He, instead, awaits the judgment of the Lord who will 'disclose the purposes of the heart' that are 'now hidden in darkness.' (1 Cor 4.5) Paul and Apollos have, despite not being aware of any judgment against them, applied this restriction on themselves to stay within the inherited traditions, 'nothing beyond what is written,' while amongst the Corinthians. (1 Cor 4.6) The point of this restriction is to allow the Corinthians to have Paul as an example, to follow after him in the same way he has followed after Christ, stretching himself to fit the form of Jesus. The Corinthians, however, have departed from this in order to glory in their own righteousness, to be wise, strong, and honourable through their own accomplishments. Paul, however, has become weak, foolish, homeless, poor, and persecuted, 'the rubbish of the world, the dregs of all things.' (1 Cor 4.13) He rebukes the Corinthians by calling out, 'For who sees anything different in you? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you

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communion with God? There is no way of providing a justification for this tacit presupposition starting from man, nor is it really proved by any theological argument. And this for the simple reason that the possibility of experiencing grace and the possibility of experiencing grace *as* grace are not the same thing.' Karl Rahner 'Relationship Between Nature and Grace' *Theological Investigations I* trans. Cornelius Ernst (Baltimore: Helicon, 1961) p. 300.  
515. Cornelius Ernst *Multiple Echo* 85.

received it, why do you boast as if it were not a gift?' (1 Cor 4.7) Their attempts to stand out through these human judgments deny the basic dependent and receptive character of their existence. In choosing to live this way they have departed from the imitation of Christ and his ways. When Paul comes to them, then, he will confront not the talk of these false apostles but their power. He will come to bring the Corinthians back into the Kingdom of God not with speech but with power. 'For the Kingdom of God is not in word but in power [δυνάμει].' (1 Cor 4.20)

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